MAKING MODERN MUSLIMS

THE POLITICS OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Edited by **ROBERT W. HEFNER**

UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I PRESS

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments vii

A Note on Spelling and Transliteration ix

1 Introduction: The Politics and Cultures of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia 1
ROBERT W. HEFNER

2 Islamic Schools, Social Movements, and Democracy in Indonesia 55
ROBERT W. HEFNER

3 Reforming Islamic Education in Malaysia: Doctrine or Dialogue? 106
RICHARD G. KRAINCE

4 Islamic Education in Southern Thailand: Negotiating Islam, Identity, and Modernity 141
JOSEPH CHINYONG LIOW

5 Muslim Metamorphosis: Islamic Education and Politics in Contemporary Cambodia 172
BJØRN ATLE BLENGSLI

6 Islamic Education in the Philippines: Political Separatism and Religious Pragmatism 205
THOMAS M. MCKENNA & ESMAEL A. ABDULA

List of Contributors 237

Index 239

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Finally, as the chapters in this volume make clear, gender issues were a critical part of the research team's investigations, yet our research team itself was gender imbalanced. This was not our original intent. At the project's outset, I recruited two women scholars to write chapters. However, as a result of unexpected demands on their time, both had to withdraw from the project. The remaining members of the research team rose to the challenge of incorporating gender questions into their own studies, and I am grateful to them for this and all their fine work.

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A NOTE ON SPELLING AND TRANSLITERATION

The essays in this volume deal with Muslim Southeast Asians who speak an array of languages and who spell and transliterate Arabic words in varied ways. Even in the case of a single language like Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian), a word like *madrasa* can be spelled in different ways (*madrasa, madrasah*). Most Southeast Asian Muslims today write their native languages in Roman scripts. When they transliterate Arabic words in their own alphabet, Southeast Asians (with the notable exception of those writing for specialized academic journals) tend to keep diacritic marks to a minimum, dispensing with most entirely. Many also tend to use the singular form of a noun as the base for the plural, thus *madrasas* rather than *madaris, fatwas,* rather than *fatawa*. There are country-specific exceptions to these rules. However, for the sake of both clarity and consistency across the chapters, we have kept transliteration simple, even dispensing with the Arabic 'ayn (as found in *shari'a*) and hamza (as in Qur'an) except in those few instances where these have become common in a regional language.

Finally, words that occur frequently throughout the volume (madrasa, ulama) are not italicized after their first use.

1 INTRODUCTION
THE POLITICS AND CULTURES OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

ROBERT W. HEFNER

Since the 9/11 attacks in the United States and the October 2002 Bali bombings in Indonesia, Islamic schools in Southeast Asia have been the focus of international attention. The young men responsible for the Bali attack, in which more than two hundred people died, had been students at an Islamic boarding school in East Java and had ties to the al-Mukmin boarding school in Central Java. Al-Mukmin is the home of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, a senior Islamic scholar who is alleged to have been the spiritual leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), an underground organization that has engaged in a campaign of bombing and terror since 2000. In the 1990s, several JI militants had also attended an Islamic boarding school in Malaysia run by Ba'asyir and his colleague, Abdullah Sungkar (now deceased), at a time when both were in self-imposed exile from Indonesia.[1]

The JI's campaign was not the only event to raise questions about the political temperament of Southeast Asia's fifty thousand Islamic schools. Since January 2004, Thailand has been rocked by a renewed

cycle of violence between state authorities and the Malay-Muslim population concentrated in the country's south. In 2004, students and teachers at two Islamic schools were accused of staging attacks on Thai government officials. In May 2005, al-Qa'ida documents were found at another school. In June 2007, radical separatists burned down eleven schools in Yala province and executed two female Thai teachers in front of one hundred children playing in the library after lunch.[2]

The discussion surrounding Islamic schools in the Philippines was no more placid. In 2000, the Muslim insurgency that has raged on and off since the 1970s flared up again after President Joseph Estrada ordered the armed forces to capture the rebel's main camp on the southern island of Mindanao. In addition to creating thousands of Muslim refugees, the assault provoked an unprecedented terrorist campaign in Manila and other Philippine cities. In 2003, the intelligence chief of the Philippines Armed Forces placed much of the blame for the terrorism squarely on Islamic *madrasas* (modern day schools). "[T]hey are teaching the children, while still young, to wage a jihad. They will become the future suicide bombers."[3]

Cambodia, too, has not escaped the Muslim-school controversy. Between 2002 and 2004, the JI military chief, Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, spent time in that Buddhist-majority country, reportedly visiting Islamic schools. His subsequent capture in Thailand led to additional arrests back in Cambodia at schools funded by a Saudi charity. Cambodian authorities alleged that militants had planned to turn their country into a staging ground for terrorist attacks on Western targets.

In Malaysia in early 2000, finally, armed militants linked to independent Islamic schools launched armed attacks on the national police. Following arrests in August 2001, investigators revealed that the militants had trained in Afghanistan and had returned to Malaysia as part of a campaign to bring the government down.

For a Western public that had long regarded Muslim politics in Southeast Asia as relatively moderate, these reports linking Islamic schools to terrorism caused anxiety and confusion. Policy analysts speculated that Southeast Asia was being transformed into a "second front" in an al-Qa'ida inspired campaign against the West.[4] Concerns like these were not limited, however, to Western circles. In the Muslim-majority countries of Malaysia and Indonesia, officials intimated

that they too feared that some among their countries' Muslim educators were mixing violent jihadism into the curriculum. In October 2005, a few days after Bali was hit by a second terrorist bombing, the Indonesian vice president, Jusuf Kalla—a Muslim close to Indonesia's mainstream Islamic organizations—blamed the attack on militants from an unnamed Islamic boarding school and warned that the government was going to have to take action against schools promoting "irresponsible" actions. Weeks later, Kalla startled Muslim educators again when he announced that the government was preparing to fingerprint all students in the country's ten thousand–strong Islamic boarding school network (see Chapter 2).[5]

Against this unsettled backdrop, the purpose of this book is to shed light on the varieties and politics of Islamic education in modern Southeast Asia. The contributors aim to provide a sense of just where Islamic education is going by examining where, culturally and politically speaking, it has come from. The book focuses on schools in five countries: the region's two dominant Muslim-majority countries, Malaysia (60% Muslim) and Indonesia (87.8%), and three countries with especially restless Muslim minorities, the Philippines, Thailand, and Cambodia.[6]

The chapters are based on a research project that began in December 2004 and ended in January 2007. The initial research was funded by the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) in Seattle, Washington, a nongovernmental and nonpartisan research center that sponsors academic research on policy-relevant issues in the broader Asian region. During each of the two years of the project, NBR provided the five researchers with funds for research assistants and for a three- to four-week stay in Southeast Asia. All together, some twenty-five researchers were involved in the five-country project on which this book is based. All of the U.S. researchers were recognized Southeast Asia specialists, and all had backgrounds in the study of Islamic education. NBR's support also allowed me as project director to extend a research collaboration I had begun in 2002–2004, with Dr. Azyumardi Azra, then rector, and Dr. Jamhari, director of the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) at Indonesia's flagship Islamic university, the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University. My earlier collaboration with the PPIM, sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts, had sought to map variation in Islamic schooling across eight provinces

in this vast country.[7] The new project included our collaborating on the conduct of surveys of educators at Indonesia's Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), modern day schools (*madrasas*), and colleges. The surveys were conducted in January 2006 and January 2007.[8]

NBR's aim in supporting this project was to contribute to informed public discussion of Islamic schooling in Southeast Asia. Coming from the fields of education, anthropology, and political science, the contributors shared NBR's interest in bringing public scholarship to bear on the topic of Islamic schooling. But we also felt that it was necessary to situate the research in a cultural and historical framework broader than present-day policy alone. In discussions of the Muslim world since 9/11, there has been a tendency on the part of Western commentators to view events primarily through the optic of their own security concerns. In a world of urgent threats and scarce analytic resources, this bias is understandable enough, and the chapters in this volume do not shy away from policy issues. Nonetheless, the contributors felt that if we allowed Western security concerns to set the entire research agenda we would lose an opportunity to understand the cultural concerns that Muslims themselves bring to their schools. We would also lose sight of the fact that Southeast Asian Muslims have been debating the proper forms of religious education and politics, not since 9/11, but since the late nineteenth century. In that century, much of the world entered what Theodore Zeldin has aptly called the "Age of Education."[9] Few of the world's peoples have more seriously grappled with the question of exactly what modern education should be than Muslim leaders here in Southeast Asia.

In the remainder of this introduction, then, I want to do three things: provide an overview of the chapters that follow; examine the varieties and genealogies of Islamic schooling in Southeast Asia; and highlight the relationship between Islamic education in Southeast Asia and that in the Middle East. Although comparative research on Islamic education in Southeast Asia has been sparse, examination of the topic offers four benefits. First, it provides a useful vantage point from which to survey the development of Islamic culture and politics across the region and to take the political pulse of both. Second, it provides insights into the changing nature of state–society relations from the late colonial period to today, and the role of public Islam in that relationship. Third, education highlights the astonishing dynamism of

processes of Islamization in this region, which accelerated in the late nineteenth century and continue in diverse forms today. By the end of the twentieth century, religious developments had transformed a world area once known for its pantheistic syncretism into a region where doctrinally normative variants of Islam hold sway.

Fourth and finally, examination of the varieties of Islamic schooling in modern Southeast Asia allows us to appreciate the nature of the struggle for Muslim hearts and minds currently taking place across the region. The struggle has less to do with al-Qa'ida terrorism—a movement that demands everyone's attention at the moment, yes, but one that is so out of step with mainstream Muslim society here that it is bound to fail—than with Muslims' efforts to do what believers in other religious traditions have had to do in the modern era: determine just what is timeless and required in their tradition, and what must be reformed in a world where much that is solid melts into air.

CENTERING ISLAM

In an article published a half-century ago, the celebrated anthropologist of Indonesian Islam, Clifford Geertz, underscored the centrality of religious education in Muslim societies and the centrality of the Islamic boarding school (*pesantren;* also *pondok,* Ind. and Malay, lit. "hut, cottage") in Muslim Southeast Asia. Using Java as his point of reference, Geertz observed, "There have been pesantren-like institutions in Java since the Hindu-Buddhist period (i.e. from the second to about the sixteenth centuries), and most likely even before, for the cluster of student disciples collected around a holy man is a pattern common throughout south and southeast Asia."[10] With the conversion of growing numbers of people to Islam, Geertz added, "what had been Hindu-Buddhist now became Islamic, a new wine in a very old bottle" (ibid.).

As Geertz's remark makes clear, scholars have long suspected that there were continuities between Islamic schools in Southeast Asia and their pre-Islamic predecessors. However, the wine-bottle metaphor leaves unanswered the question of just how much Southeast Asia's Islamic schools actually owe to Middle Eastern precedents, and how much they reflect pre-Islamic legacies. We lack the detailed local histories required to fully answer this question, particularly for the period from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries, when Islam first spread

across much of the Malayo-Indonesian archipelago. Since Geertz wrote his article, however, two things have become more apparent: first, the historical development of Islamic schooling in Southeast Asia has stronger parallels with the development of Islamic education in the Middle East than Geertz imagined; and, second, Islamic education in Southeast Asia has for at least two centuries been marked by ceaseless change rather than old-bottle stasis. To appreciate the scale of this change requires that we understand how the advance of religious education in modern Southeast Asia compares with the development of Islamic schooling in the Middle East from earliest times to today.

Learning as Worship

Islam is a religion of the divine word, and religious study has long been regarded as an act of worship in its own right. "The study and transmission of the revealed word of God and the sayings of His prophet, and of the system of law to which the revelation pointed, are the fundamental service God demands of his creatures."[11] For pious individuals, religious study usually begins with learning to read and recite—but not literally understand—the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (c. 570–632 C.E.) by way of the Angel Jibriel (Gabriel) between 610 and 632 C.E.[12] Historians of Islam believe that, while the Prophet was still alive, the Qur'an was not written down, but memorized and transmitted orally. Although scholars disagree as to exactly when the Qur'an was finally put into manuscript form, the most widely held view is that the recension took place not long after the death of the Prophet in 632 C.E., at the instruction of the caliphs 'Umar (634–44) and 'Uthman (644–56).[13] It was around this same time that a lightly formalized educational institution appeared on the scene, dedicated to teaching individuals to read and recite the Qur'an.

Across the Muslim world, Qur'anic recitation has remained the model for elementary religious education to this day, including in modern Southeast Asia. In the Middle East, Qur'anic reading and recitation of this sort often take place in a small free-standing school known as the *kuttab* or *maktab*. Although in modern times the kuttab has occasionally been freighted with other educational missions (including, in several instances, teaching secular subjects),[14] for the most

part the institution has remained true to its founding mission, serving as a school where youths learn Arabic script so as to read and recite the Qur'an. In modern Southeast Asia, elementary Qur'anic study is carried out in a similar fashion, in activities known as *pengajian Qur'an* (lit. "Qur'anic study").[15] This instruction usually takes place in mosques, prayer houses (*musholla, langgar*), or teacher's homes, rather than a special-purpose building. In recent years, too, the religious classes provided by governments in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in the southern Philippines have also included elementary Qur'anic instruction.[16]

Over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries C.E., the body of knowledge associated with the Islamic tradition became richer and more variegated than that of earlier generations. During these centuries, the hadith, the recorded and verified words and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, were gathered into standardized collections, which eventually became the second foundation on which Islam's authoritative traditions (Sunna) are grounded. The body of scholarship associated with Islam's legal schools (*madhahib*) was also composed during this period, although at first there were many more than the four Sunni schools that exist today (Shi'ism has its own school). The composition and standardization of Muslim jurisprudence (*fiqh*) were all part of broader processes whereby the law came to be more rationalized and systematic and scholars of the law came to play a more central role in religious education and public affairs.[17]

The expansion of the religious sciences also meant that the time required to become a learned scholar became greater.[18] During the first part of this two-century period, most study took place in informal learning circles (Ar. *halaq,* sing. *halqa*) that met in homes, bazaar stalls, and, above all, mosques, under the direction of a master scholar (*shaykh*). By the end of the ninth century, however, mosques that provided advanced religious study also began to erect hostels for resident students. Even with this change, however, instruction still took place, not in classrooms, but in informal learning circles under the guidance of an individual scholar.

In the tenth century, a full three centuries after the Qur'an's revelation, some communities went further, establishing the first madrasas, free-standing schools for intermediate and advanced religious learning. The first of these institutions was founded in tenth-century

Khurasan in eastern Iran, but the innovation quickly spread westward into cities and towns in the Arab heartland. By the twelfth century, the madrasa had become "perhaps the most characteristic religious institution of the medieval Near Eastern urban landscape."[19] By the thirteenth century, the institution had reached Muslim Spain and India.[20] In many of these locales, madrasas educated not only religious scholars but much of the local cultural elite, including mathematicians, medical doctors, and astronomers.[21]

During these same first centuries, the madrasa complex gradually assumed a more or less standard form. Most madrasas came to have a mosque, dormitories, and classrooms, as well as a residence for the shaykh-director and a washing area for ablutions prior to prayer. Over time, many madrasas also erected mausoleums for the founding shaykh and his family. On the assumption that in death as in life the *shaykh* could intercede with God and serve as a channel for divine grace (*barakah*), many tombs became the object of religious prilgrimage (*ziyarah*). In traditionalist madrasas in the Middle East or South Asia, and in Southeast Asia's pondok pesantren, pilgrimage to the shrines of great religious teachers is still common today.[22] However, where modern Muslim reformists hold sway the practice is condemned and tomb complexes have been demolished or secularized as archaeological monuments.[23]

Not long into the Middle Period in Islamic history (1000–1500 C.E.), the madrasa curriculum had also taken on a more or less familiar form. The larger schools provided instruction in Qur'an recitation (*qira'a*), hadith, Arabic grammar (*nahw*), Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principles of religion (*usul ad-din*), the sources of the law (*usul al-fiqh*), and didactic theology (*kalam*).

Notwithstanding this standardization, for most of history madrasa curricula continued to vary from school to school and region to region. Indeed, in general, the madrasa was a less formalized and corporate entity than its counterpart in the late medieval West, the university. Madrasas were funded by pious endowments (*waqf,* pl. *awqaf*), which were formally recognized in Islamic law. Its legal standing aside, the premodern madrasa never developed a board of governors, a centrally regulated curriculum, institution-wide examinations, or a corporate identity stronger than its master shaykhs. At its heart, religious learning remained "fundamentally and persistently an informal affair."[24] It was

informal, not in the sense of being casual, but in its being anchored on the student's love and devotion to his teacher, rather than enrollment in a corporate institution. A student—all were male—could study with several teachers and at several different madrasas. His standing in the community of scholars would forever be defined, however, by the reputation of his teacher or teachers, not by a degree he received from some formal institution.

Some medieval madrasas, particularly those in the Islamic northeast (Turkey to India), also provided instruction in nonreligious subjects, including arithmetic, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and poetry. From the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine in the Arab Middle East and northern India were the most sophisticated in the world, and some madrasas excelled in the teaching of these, as they were known, "foreign sciences." However, the very use of the phrase "foreign sciences" to refer to these disciplines of knowledge was indicative of their precarious standing in the madrasa curriculum. By the end of the Muslim Middle Period, most Middle Eastern madrasas provided little if any instruction in advanced mathematics, astronomy, or medicine.[25] Instruction in these fields had migrated out of madrasas into hospitals (long a stronghold of the nonreligious sciences) and the private homes of scholars. In fact, in many Muslim territories advanced instruction in these fields passed away entirely.[26]

Herein lies one of the great ironies of the Old World's civilizational history. During what was Western Europe's Middle Ages, libraries and madrasas in the Middle East had preserved Greek works in philosophy and natural sciences lost to Christian Europe. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars in Spain and other Muslim lands translated many of these works into Latin. The transfer of the translated classics back to Western Europe sparked a revival of interest in the natural sciences and humanistic philosophy so strong that these subjects were given pride of place in the newly established universities of the West.[27] Although earlier preserved and studied by generations of Arab- and Indian-Muslim scholars, the same Greek works were gradually marginalized from most madrasa curricula. Indeed, by the end of the Muslim Middle Ages their place in Middle Eastern education as a whole was greatly diminished.[28] Jurisprudence had become the queen of the advanced religious sciences and the

centerpiece of madrasa education. More significant yet, many of the jurists (*fuqaha*) who interpreted God's law had come to view the study of philosophy and the foreign sciences as "useless . . . and disrespectful of religion and law."[29] The result was that the philosophy and natural science once so integral to Muslim intellectual life disappeared from many institutions of higher learning, not to be revived until the great educational transformations of the modern era.

Recentering Islam

The evolution of the madrasa curriculum during the Muslim Middle Ages was part of a broader recentering of Islamic knowledge and authority at that time. The recentering had two primary features, each of which anticipated changes in the economy of religious knowledge that were to take place in Southeast Asian Islam several centuries later. First, the rise of madrasas led to a relative standardization and homogenization of the knowledge and texts transmitted in institutions of higher religious learning. This standardization was facilitated by the collection and verification of hadiths; the creation of the main schools of Islamic law; and the repositioning of the law as the most authoritative discipline in advanced institutions of learning. By the fifteenth century, Richard Bulliet's statement about changes in the hadith tradition could be applied to the other core traditions of Islamic knowledge: "The upshot of this process was the development of a homogeneous corpus of authoritative Islamic texts that contributed greatly to a growing uniformity of Islamic belief and practice throughout the vast area in which Muslims lived."[30] A similar process of standardization and canonization would take place in Southeast Asia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with the rise of new forms of Islamic schooling.

The Middle Ages' recentering had momentous implications, not only for texts and learning, but for religious authority as well. The spread of madrasas and the creation of a canon meant that one's standing among ulama now depended on mastery of key texts under a recognized religious master. In other words, the madrasa and the canon provided clearer criteria for defining just who was and who was not a religious authority. As in all traditions of knowledge, the effort to determine who should be included among the leadership also involved clarifying who was to be excluded. With the rise of ma-

drasas, the grounds for that exclusion became clearer, at least as far as the religious establishment was concerned. "The 'ulama . . . sought to restrict the ability of individuals who possessed only a modicum of intellectual training, or who might even be illiterate, but who nonetheless claimed considerable religious authority among the uneducated masses, to define for their audiences what was properly Islamic."[31]

It goes without saying that this "recentering and homogenization"[32] of Islamic knowledge did not apply equally to all forms of learning and to all specialists of religious knowledge. The process of social authorization was most effective at the commanding heights of the Muslim community, among people responsive to madrasa disciplines. It is helpful to remember, however, that until the nineteenth century 98 to 99 percent of the population in the Middle East was illiterate, and most of it was rural.[33] Beyond the ranks of the ulama, then, less standardized streams of religious knowledge continued to flow, and most were considered Islamic by their custodians. Equally important, claimants to these nonstandard forms of esoteric knowledge (Ar. *'ilm*) were often held in high regard by the broader Muslim public.

Thus, for example, even in cities like late-medieval Cairo, well known for its many madrasas, there was no shortage of unconventional religious masters. A colorful case in point was the *shaykh ummi,* an illiterate religious teacher who claimed to obtain his Islamic knowledge, not from texts and gray-bearded scholars, but from visions of the Prophet and the depths of his heart. His religious language was "alien to the discourse of the jurists and the more learned Sufis"[34] Not far away in Damascus one encountered similarly unconventional religious figures, like the dervishes who "flouted social and religious norms: dressing in rags or (in some cases) not at all . . . ; deliberately disregarding cultic practices such as prayer; publicly indulging in the use of hashish and other intoxicants, and . . . piercing various bodily parts, including their genitals."[35] Notwithstanding the differences of time and space, the parallels between these unusual religious experts and the *dhukuns, bomohs,* and shamans of modern Muslim Southeast Asia are striking.

The point of this comparison is that, far more than was once realized by many Western scholars, there are striking parallels between the recentering of religious authority made possible through the development of Islamic education in the medieval Middle East and processes

taking place in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Southeast Asia. For obvious historical reasons, the expansion of religious education and the creation of a public Islamic culture in Southeast Asia lagged well behind that of the Middle East. However, in the nineteenth century, when Southeast Asia was finally drawn into deeper dialogue with global Muslim civilization, the schools that emerged and the cultural processes that unfolded bore a striking resemblance to those seen earlier in the Middle East. In particular, the spread of new forms of religious schooling in Southeast Asia played a central role in the creation of networks and discourses for stipulating in a "disciplined" manner just who was a religious authority and what counted as Islam.[36]

The early phases of the recentering of Islam in Southeast Asia were not exactly like those in the Muslim Middle East, however, because they were constrained by cultural and political realities peculiar to modern Southeast Asia. These included the late arrival of Islam in the region, the role played by the indigenous state in Islamization, and the shock and awe of a European colonialism even more disruptive in its impact there than in the Middle East.

ISLAMIZATION AND EDUCATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Against this Middle Eastern backdrop, one might be tempted to conclude that madrasas were the vehicle that carried Islam to Southeast Asia. After all, from early on Southeast Asian Muslims appeared to engage in elementary Qur'anic study similar to that provided in the Middle Eastern *kuttab*. However, the history of Islam in Southeast Asia argues against such a conclusion. The reason for caution is that, until the nineteenth century, Southeast Asia had no broad-based institutions for intermediate or advanced education in the Islamic sciences comparable to those that had existed in the Middle East for almost a thousand years. To put the matter bluntly, the first centuries of Islamization in Southeast Asia were characterized by a dearth of centers of advanced Islamic learning, the public's limited familiarity with the details of Islamic law (the *shari'a*) and, a few fervent periods excepted, a socially circumscribed role for the custodians of God's law, the ulama. Notwithstanding the relative poverty of formal educational institutions, early modern Southeast Asia developed an Islamic public culture of a sort. But the key elements in that culture were produced and reproduced through the medium, not of

organized religious schooling, but of religious ritual sponsored in its most exemplary form by sultans and kings.

Islamization's Plural Faces

Arab Muslim merchants had traveled through Southeast Asia on their way to southern China at least since the eighth century. Mass conversion to Islam took place only several centuries later, however, much of it during the period the historian Anthony Reid has aptly called Southeast Asia's "Age of Commerce," from 1450 to 1680.[37] During these centuries, conversion followed the trade routes undergirding the commercial boom taking place in this maritime region, with the first large-scale conversions occurring in or around mercantile ports. In this early period, Southeast Asia was still a panoply of Hindu-Buddhist states, island chiefdoms, and tropical forest tribes. The checkered nature of Southeast Asian society, and the fact that Islam did not arrive on the heels of horse-mounted Arab or Turkic armies, guaranteed that conversion to Islam was a patchwork process, occurring swiftly in some areas and slowly or not at all in others. Until the early nineteenth century, centers of advanced religious learning were few, and advanced study in the Islamic sciences played only a marginal role in the Islamization of the populace.

Islam's first centuries in Southeast Asia displayed two features that were to influence the nature of Islam well into the modern era. First, at the towering heights of political society, Islamization assumed a "raja-centric" face, in the sense that rulers were central both to the initial conversion process and to the exemplary public culture constructed in its wake. The annals of Islam's early period in the region abound with accounts of how a dream, cure, or otherwise supernatural event led a local ruler to embrace Islam, typically after encountering a mystical shaykh. After the miracle, the ruler commanded his subjects to accept the new faith as well.[38] The ruler's centrality in religious affairs is also seen in his intervention in scholarly disputes.[39] Above all else, however, the ruler's pivotal place in Islamic life was expressed in great public ceremonies, which gave visible form to his claim to be the axis, not only of the secular polity, but of the Muslim community as well.

A raja-centric profession of Islam was not something unique to Southeast Asia; in fact, it was typical of the "Persianized monarchies"[40] found across the Asian-Muslim world from Central Asia and

India to the Malay archipelago. In these societies, "Far from being in ideological conflict with Islam, kingship found new ways to express its transcendence in Islamic terms."[41] One of these ways was to limit the social spheres to which the shari'a was applied, or to highlight those aspects of the law that buttressed the authority of the ruler.[42] Another way in which rulers expressed their exemplary religiosity was by sponsoring scholarly learning circles at the court or royal mosque. The importance of these royally sponsored learning circles was heightened by the fact that beyond the palace the infrastructure for advanced religious education was woefully undeveloped. In some places, especially in Java, the resulting imbalance of power between ruler and ulama led to occasional "satirizing of shariah-mindedness."[43] In a few instances the imbalance even led to the violent persecution of ulama imprudent enough to challenge the ruler's religious and political prerogatives.[44]

The fact that the heights of Islamic culture tended to be raja-centric is not to say, as one used to hear in Southeast Asian studies, that Islam was no more than a "veneer" on an otherwise Hindu-Buddhist substratum. The veneer metaphor overlooks the sociological fact that, unlike in India, where much of the non-Islamic infrastructure survived the Muslim conquests, the temples and monasteries of Hindu-Buddhist worship in island Southeast Asia experienced a near-total collapse in the centuries following local rulers' conversion to Islam. (Bali was the great exception.) Just prior to the Islamization of its courts in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the kingdoms in Java's heartland are estimated to have had some two hundred centers of Hindu-Buddhist monasticism and learning. With the notable exception of a small Hindu Javanese enclave in a corner of mountainous East Java,[45] not one of these institutions survived into the modern era.

Another reason the veneer metaphor is misleading is that it overlooks the fact that, from early on, some among Southeast Asia's small community of Islamic scholars had ties to a broader Islamic ecumene and were familiar with the standards of religious observance upheld in other Muslim lands. Many in the scholarly community may have been members of Sufi orders, or were independent ulama influenced by Sufi ideas. The more heterodox among these adepts may have had little interest in the shari'a or (more plausibly) understood its meaning in a mystical or analogical manner. However, as Martin van Bruinessen, Th. G. Th. Pigeaud, and Anthony Reid have all demonstrated, there

were legal digests of a more or less orthodox Sunnism from early on in Southeast Asia's Muslim period, and in the seventeenth century rulers in several kingdoms attempted to enforce aspects of the law.[46]

Although there were whirlpools of legal-minded Islam, and the towering heights of public culture were officially Islamic, the broader landscape of knowledge remained variegated, to say the least; popular religious knowledge, in particular, continued to flow through a twisting variety of cultural streams. In some parts of Muslim Southeast Asia, pre-Islamic traditions of exorcism, artistic performance, and spirit cultism survived well into the twentieth century. Court-sponsored rituals of guardian- and ancestral-spirit veneration, like the Malay and Javanese rulers' annual offerings to spirits of the sea, showed that even the exemplary bearers of official Islam were eager to tap this spiritualist well.[47] In this rich religious landscape, Malay *bomoh* and *pawang,* Javanese *dhukuns,* and southern Sulawesi's transgendered priests (*bissu*) all managed to find a place for themselves.[48]

There was a cultural price to be paid, however, if these non-ulama traditions were to survive. It was that they be identified, not as Hindu or Buddhist or otherwise non-Islamic, but as forms of spiritual knowledge (Ar. *'ilm;* Ind. *ilmu*) that in some sense were compatible with or even encompassed by Islam. Although some ritual specialists occasionally transgressed this stipulation, over time the arrangement created a political economy of knowledge quite different from that of Hindus in India or Jews and Christians in Syria after the Muslim conquests. Even after Muslims had captured the commanding political heights, the adherents of these non-Islamic religions were still able to maintain a non-Islamic identity, consolidate what remained of their religious institutions, and continue cultural exchanges with religious fellows beyond their own territory. The custodians of nonstandard esoterica in Muslim Southeast Asia, however, were obliged to downplay or even sever their ties to any broader ecumene, thus becoming just one among the many specialists of occult arts operating in a community called Islamic.[49]

As an infrastructure for reformed Islamic education was put in place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the claim that these non-ulama traditions were actually Islamic was to be put to a new test; growing numbers of popular ritual specialists were to fail. Like their Middle Eastern counterparts a few centuries earlier, Southeast Asian Muslims were about to experience an education-leveraged recentering

of religious knowledge and authority. Ironically, the process in Muslim Southeast Asia was hastened by the advance of Western colonialism.

Colonial Era Recenterings

The fact that the ruler was "was the primary object of loyalty"[50] and that the landscape was cross-cut by multiple streams of religious knowledge does not mean that no one in Muslim Southeast Asia was familiar with the Islamic sciences and, in particular, Islamic law. Although some Western scholars once believed that in the precolonial era Muslim kingdoms did not have Islamic courts or judges (*qadis*), recent research makes it clear that Islamic judges applying aspects of the shari'a operated for brief periods in early modern Melaka, Aceh, West Java, Brunei, Makassar, and Sulu.[51] In a comprehensive analysis, Anthony Reid has observed that the application of the shari'a peaked in the early seventeenth century, a period that coincided with the acme of state absolutism across the region.[52] However, as Michael Peletz has recently argued, the fact remains that for the period extending from the coming of Islam to the rise of Western colonialism, most rulers applied the shari'a selectively if at all, and most disputes beyond elite circles were handled by local notables drawing on customary regulations (some of which had Islamic elements) rather than a distinct body of religious law.[53]

More fundamentally, and again contrary to what specialists of Southeast Asian Islam once believed, a broad network of schools providing advanced learning in jurisprudence and the Islamic canon does not appear to have been solidly in place until well into the nineteenth century. Western scholars of Southeast Asian Islam had once thought otherwise, in part because indigenous manuscripts composed for courtly audiences, like Java's *Serat Centhini* (written in the early nineteenth century, but based on older materials) and Sunda's *Sejarah Banten,* make reference to institutions of Islamic learning said to date back to the seventeenth century. An earlier generation of Western scholars took these references as proof that institutions for advanced Islamic learning similar to today's pondok pesantrens were already widespread in seventeenth-century Southeast Asia.[54]

The weight of evidence today, however, suggests that schools for intermediate-to-advanced Islamic learning began to appear in significant numbers only toward the end of the eighteenth century, and

became widespread only in the final decades of the nineteenth. Indeed, schools for specialized study in the Islamic sciences reached remote corners of Muslim Southeast Asia like the southern Philippines, Cambodia, and Sulawesi even later, in the first half of the twentieth century. Prior to this time, a small number of scholars from these areas may have traveled overseas for study, to other parts of Southeast Asia or the Hijaz in Arabia. But their ability to reshape public religious culture back in their homelands was limited.[55]

Developments in the sultanate of Banten in northwestern Java illustrate how much things changed in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the spread of new and more formally organized religious schools. Along with Aceh, Malacca, Patani, Brunei, and coastal central Java, Banten was long renowned as one of the more comprehensively Islamic of Southeast Asian territories. If one expected any area in Southeast Asia to have had a network of religious schools early on, then, Banten would be such a region. As early as 1638, Banten's ruler acquired the title of Sultan from the Grand Sharif of Mecca, and in the seventeenth century the kingdom imported a qadi-judge from the holy land as well. In a thoughtful and important review, however, Martin van Bruinessen has shown that even in Banten a network of boarding schools (pesantrens) for advanced study did not begin to be built until the mid-eighteenth century, and it did not become extensive until a century later. Prior to that time, in-depth religious study was offered only in court and urban settings, usually under the patronage of the ruler. Wandering religious scholars, including itinerant Arab traders, may have also passed through courts and towns and provided occasional instruction in a religious text (*kitab*) or two. For the most part, however, in Banten and other parts of Java, "rural *kiais* [*shaykhs* who direct boarding schools] and *pesantrens* are a relatively recent phenomenon."[56]

Historical data from other self-consciously Islamic parts of Southeast Asia, such as Aceh, West Sumatra, Patani, and South Sulawesi, suggest that in these regions, too, the spread of schools for advanced learning was a modern development. The process probably began in the late eighteenth century in West Sumatra and Patani, and more than a century later in South Sulawesi and Kalimantan. Certainly there were modes of Islamic learning prior to the late eighteenth century, not least of all of a Sufistic and folk-ritualistic sort. No doubt, too,

there may have been Middle Eastern or South Asian scholars who occasionally visited these areas and shared bits of knowledge with local scholars. However, until the modern period, these scholars' impact on public Islamic culture was also limited.[57]

The spread of schools for advanced Islamic learning was finally spurred on by three developments. First, reform movements emphasizing the need to purify Islam of irreligious innovations had gained ground in Arabia and other parts of the Middle East to which Southeast Asian Muslims traveled. Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's reformist jihad in eighteenth-century Arabia was the most influential of these Middle Eastern movements, but it was not the only one.[58] An efflorescence of reformist scholarship in southern Thailand's Patani district, and the Padri War in West Sumatra, showed that the Arabian winds of religious reform had begun to blow across Southeast Asia.[59]

The second development spurring school development was the greater ease of travel to the Middle East and within Southeast Asia itself as a result of the expansion of European rule in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Already in the 1820s, pilgrimage from Singapore and Malaya to Arabia was on the rise; the flow of pilgrims surged after the opening of the Suez Canal in November 1869.[60] Although as yet few Philippine or Cambodian Muslims made the journey, pilgrims from Singapore, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and southern Thailand traveled in such large numbers that, in 1885, the Dutch scholar and government officer Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje concluded that Jawa (the name given to Southeast Asians in the Arab lands) formed the single largest community in the holy city.[61] In 1927, 64,000 pilgrims from the Dutch Indies and British Malaya made the hajj, comprising a full 42 percent of the foreign total.

Here, then, was the historical and sociological ground for the establishment of a new network of schools and, with it, a fundamental recentering of Southeast Asian Islam. Whereas, in its first centuries, processes of Islamization in Southeast Asia had been stimulated by contact with Muslims from India, Arabia, and southeastern China, "once significant numbers of Indonesians had started making the pilgrimage . . . it was predominantly returning pilgrims and students who steered the process."[62] And they did so typically by establishing religious schools based on prototypes encountered during travel and study in the Middle East.[63]

The effects of heightened travel to the Middle East were seen not just in education and pilgrimage but in the growth of new print media. In 1884, the Ottoman rulers had established a government press in Mecca that published books in Arabic and in Malay under the supervision of a respected Patani scholar, Ahmad. B. Muhammad Zayn al-Patani.[64] Combined with new models of religious education to which pilgrims were also exposed in Arabia, these publications had a powerful influence on Islamic education back in the Jawi lands.

The third development fueling the spread of Islamic schooling was the crisis of authority caused by the deepening penetration of colonial rule into Southeast Asian society. In southern Thailand's Malay provinces, the Thai government was ratcheting up its controls over the Muslim population. In the East Indies (today's Indonesia), the Dutch were completing their conquest of the archipelago, often, as in Aceh, through long and bitter military campaigns. In some of these territories, the foreigners' cooptation of native rulers caused a legitimation crisis of such proportions that the popular classes began to look to the newly ascendant ulama rather than to indigenous rulers as champions of native welfare. Thus, for example, the networks provided by boarding schools and Sufi brotherhoods supplied much of the social organization for the peasant rebellion that swept West Java in 1888.[65]

In Cambodia and the Philippines, the situation of the Muslim minority was quiet by comparison with some parts of Southeast Asia, but these regions, too, were about to be shaken by twentieth-century programs of colonialism and nation building. In Malaya, finally, the 1874 Pangkor Engagement between the British and Malay rulers was ostensibly premised on a principle of noninterference in Islamic affairs. Under the terms of the agreement, the British assumed responsibility for the colony's political, economic, and foreign affairs while leaving control of "Malay religion and custom" to the sultans and their regional chiefs. Rather than freezing the status quo, the agreement opened the way to British-sponsored immigration by Chinese and Indians, a development that eventually threatened to make the Muslim Malays a minority in their own lands.[66]

Although the precise course of events varied by country, then, the half-century from 1870 to the 1920s marked a turning point in the recentering of Islamic learning and authority in Southeast Asia. With the qualified exception of the Philippines (which appears never

to have had a pondok tradition and saw the establishment of madrasa day schools only after the Second World War), new religious schools were now being established in the countryside as well as in towns. The schools became one of the nuclei for the pietistic movements that were to sweep Muslim Southeast Asian in the twentieth century. The revitalization was also to lead to the suppression of many of the folk variants of Islam for which Southeast Asia had once been renowned.

The orthodoctrinal turn did not do away, however, with divisions in the Muslim community. Across much of the region there was a new and bitter rivalry between "Old Group" (Kaum Tua) traditionalists associated with Islamic boarding schools and "New Group" (Kaum Muda) modernists intent on building madrasas. The contest was to create a political and educational legacy that has endured to this day.

THE ABODE DIVIDED: NEW GROUP AND OLD GROUP ISLAM

The competition between New Group and Old Group Muslims was a Southeast Asian version of a contest that raged in broad expanses of the Muslim world at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. In Southeast Asia, the division was exacerbated by the new political economy of religious culture. The key features of that political economy were rapid urban growth, the appearance of new print technologies, and above all else, the intensified effort to devise an effective Muslim response to the unrelenting advance of Western colonialism.

Islam Detached from Place

New Group reformists tended to live in Southeast Asia's newly developing urban centers, including Singapore, Penang, Batavia, and the major towns of West Sumatra and Central Java.[67] By contrast, like the boarding schools they championed, Old Group traditionalists were predominantly rural or suburban residents living in areas not yet drawn into the multiethnic macrocosm emerging at the borders of the colonial economy. From their urban bases, New Group Muslims rallied to a more universal profession of Islam, one relatively "detached from any particular place"[68] and less closely tied to ethnically defined religious leaderships.

Modern ideas of Islamic reform had become popular among Southeast Asians studying in Mecca in the 1880s and 1890s and in Cairo a

few years later. However, in the Middle East at this time, the Jawi community's debate over reformist ideas had not yet assumed the polarized form it was to take on back in colonial Southeast Asia in the 1910s.[69] When the rivalry finally reached the archipelago, the major issues over which the two sides argued focused on what counted as true religious knowledge, and how and by whom it was to be transmitted.

Influenced by the ideas of the great Middle Eastern reformists Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897) and his most celebrated disciple, the Egyptian Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), New Group Muslims emphasized the clarity and perfection of the Qur'an and the Sunna, and the need to purge Islamic traditions of all unacceptable innovations (*bid'a*). Among the practices reformists saw as inappropriate were several dear to the hearts of Muslim traditionalists: faithful reliance (*taqlid*) on the study of classical religious texts (*kitabs*); affiliation with an established school of Islamic jurisprudence (*madhab*); the recitation of a catechism (the *talqin*) to the deceased immediately after burial; the utterance of an expression of intent before one's daily prayers; and pilgrimage (*ziyarah*) to the burial sites of Muslim saints.

New Group reformists also differed from Old Group traditionalists on several less doctrinal but still pressing issues. The former were keen on women's education, although this reform was soon adopted by traditionalists in the Dutch Indies and British Malaya (see Chapter 2, this volume). The modernists also promoted the study of science and technology, both of which they saw, not as Western creations, but as products of a human reason whose use God had intended for all humanity. New Group Muslims also made ready use of newspapers and journals, organized themselves into educational and welfare associations on the model of Western citizens, and replaced the traditionalist scholarly costume of sarong and tunic with ties and Western pants. On the vital question of women's dress, the reformists tended to be more conservative than the already modest traditionalists. New Group enthusiasts promoted long-sleeved and more flowing (rather than tight-fitting) tunics, long skirts, and a more encompassing veil.

On matters of local custom, modernists tended to be less tolerant than traditionalists when the custom in question seemed to veer into religious terrains, as with, for example, the long-cherished habit of presenting food offerings to deceased ancestors. Over time, however, Old Group traditionalists came to agree with the New Group reform-

ists on matters of this sort, insisting that folk rituals inconsistent with Islam should be suppressed.[70] The cumulative effect of both groups' educational activities was the creation of a new idea of what religion and orthodoxy comprise. Rather than a matter of initiatic discipline and ineffable wonder, religion was being redefined as something objective, easily transmitted, clearly separable from local custom, and based on explicit scriptural precedent.[71]

The Traditionalist Monopoly Broken

Whatever their differences in matters of doctrine and custom, it was with regard to schools that the competition between New Group and Old Group Muslims became most heated. The observation of the Indonesian historian Taufik Abdullah on the New Group movement in West Sumatra applies equally to other parts of Southeast Asia: "In the long run, the most important aspect of the Islamic modernist movement was its school reform which formed the foundation for a rapid increase of its followers and for continuity in the movement."[72]

Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century the traditionalists' boarding schools enjoyed a monopoly on advanced Islamic education, the modernists challenged that trust by introducing a new type of religious school, which they referred to by the Arabic word *madrasa*. The first madrasas were established in the 1910s and 1920s in strongholds of New Group reform like Singapore, West Sumatra, and south-central Java. However, by the beginning of the Second World War, madrasas had spread to southern Thailand, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and even (albeit at first unsuccessfully) Cambodia.

Although New Group reformers used the familiar Arabic term, the madrasa in modern Southeast Asia differed from the institution of the same name in the Middle East. Although in the Arab-speaking Middle East today the term "madrasa" can be applied to any type of school (including secular ones), in earlier Muslim history it referred to an institution of higher Islamic learning as opposed to schools providing elementary religious instruction, like the kuttab used for Qur'anic recitation. By contrast, in twentieth-century Southeast Asia, the term "madrasa" came to refer to, not an institution of advanced Islamic learning, but to Islamic elementary, middle, or high schools that combined general ("secular") education with religious instruction. In addition to these innovations, madrasas differed from Old Group boarding schools by

doing away with learning circles (*halaqah*) with their students huddled on the floor around a religious master. In place of learning circles, madrasas used well-kept classrooms, blackboards, age-graded classes, and examinations. When they first appeared on the Southeast Asian scene in the early 1900s, madrasas were also associated with girls' education, scout clubs, student newspapers, and sports of Western provenance. In Malaya, Indonesia, and southern Thailand, madrasas also led the way in introducing textbooks printed in Roman letters rather than the modified Arabic script known locally as *jawi*.

The most controversial of madrasa innovations was the inclusion of general or "secular" education in the curriculum. New Group reformists claimed that the Old Group's neglect of science, mathematics, and history was one of the causes of the Muslim political decline in the face of Western colonialism. Modernists insisted that the neglect reflected the Old Group's emphasis on "imitation" (*taqlid*) of centuries-old masters rather than the application of independent reasoning (*ijtihad*).

The New Group critique eventually transformed Islamic education across Southeast Asia, even impacting traditionalist institutions. However, its accusation that Old Group schools were stubbornly resistant to change was a misrepresentation of historical reality. As in the case of the education of young women, some Old Group scholars moved quickly to adopt New Group reforms. In the 1920s and 1930s, a few Old Group schools took steps to introduce general education into their curricula, creating a hybrid boarding school that blended religious study with general education. More fundamentally, the New Group's allegation that the Old Group was resistant to change overlooked the fact that, even prior to the New Group's arrival, the traditionalists had been in the throes of educational reforms of their own.

Making Traditionalists Modern

The sacred texts long at the heart of Southeast Asia's pondok and pesantren boarding schools are collectively known as the "yellow books" (*kitab kuning*), because of the color of the paper on which they were written in the late nineteenth century. Most kitabs are commentaries (Ind. *syarah;* Ar. *sharh*), in the local dialect and/or Arabic, on an Arabic text that was itself a commentary or gloss on some older Arabic text. For many years, scholars of Islamic history had assumed that

the *kitab* curriculum in late-twentieth-century boarding schools was identical to that used in the nineteenth century. However, two studies of the kitab kuning, the first published in 1886 by the Dutch colonial scholar L. W. C. van den Berg, and the second a pathbreaking work published in 1989 by the Dutch anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen, reveal just how much the curriculum of traditionalist boarding schools has changed.[73]

Van den Berg's study showed that, although commentaries drawing on the Qur'an and hadith were used in boarding schools, hadith collections were not yet studied in their own right. The absence is surprising, because hadith study has long been part of the core curriculum of institutions of higher religious learning in the Middle East. Equally surprising, in van den Berg's era there was only one kitab in the boarding school curriculum dedicated to the exegesis (*tafsir*) of the Qur'an. A century later, based on exhaustive travel to schools across Southeast Asia and the collection of nine hundred textbooks, van Bruinessen was able to demonstrate just how much the boarding school curriculum had changed:

> [A] significant change has taken place in the past century. There are no less than ten different Qur'anic commentaries (in Arabic, Malay, Javanese, and Indonesian) in the collection, besides straightforward translations (also called *tafsir*) into Javanese and Sundanese. The number of *hadith* compilations is even more striking. There is almost no *pesantren* now where *hadith* is not taught as a separate subject. The main emphasis in instruction remains, however, on *fiqh,* the Islamic science par excellence. There have been no remarkable changes in the *fiqh* texts studied, but the discipline of *usul al-fiqh* (the foundations or bases of *fiqh*) has been added to the curriculum of many *pesantren,* thereby allowing a more flexible and dynamic view of *fiqh*.[74]

In just one century, then, the study of kitab in Southeast Asian boarding schools had been realigned so as to ground the curriculum more firmly on three subjects: Qur'anic interpretation; study of the Traditions of the Prophet (hadith); and fiqh, now expanded to include the principles of jurisprudence.[75] These changes demonstrate that

traditionalist education was anything but static. The changes are also noteworthy for the way in which they brought Islamic education in Southeast Asia into closer alignment with the educational recentering effected by Middle Eastern madrasas several centuries earlier.

THE BOOK CHAPTERS

This, then, is the historical background to the five chapters that follow. Each chapter picks up the school story in the early years of the twentieth century and traces the development of Islamic education to this day. Along the way, each also addresses a host of issues, including the variety of Islamic schools in each country; the message of their educational curriculum regarding citizenship, gender, and pluralism; and the implications of the school system for public culture and politics in contemporary Southeast Asia.

Educational Dynamism in Islamic Indonesia

The situation of Islamic education in Indonesia is arguably the most dynamic in Southeast Asia. The reform of Southeast Asia's kitab kuning curriculum went further in Indonesia than in any other Southeast Asian country. Nowhere, too, was the expansion of Islamic boarding schools at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries more socially momentous. The unhesitant dynamism shown by traditionalist educators ensured that when the New Group reformists arrived on the scene in the 1910s and the 1920s, the traditionalists responded with educational reforms of their own. Although some traditionalist schools kept to a religion-only curriculum, several of the most distinguished, like the famous Tebuireng pesantren in East Java,[76] moved quickly to integrate general education into their school programs, often by building madrasa on the school complex's grounds. Traditionalists responded to other New Group innovations in an equally bold manner. They established the first boarding schools for girls in the late 1920s,[77] and a national association of Islamic scholars in 1926. In the 1930s, they lent their support to Indonesia's fledgling nationalist movement, even signaling their preference for Sukarno over his more self-consciously Islamic rivals.[78]

Although, unlike in other parts of Southeast Asia, traditionalists in Indonesia have continued to enjoy broader popular support than their modernist rivals, modernists associated with groups like the Muhammadiyah (estab. 1912) made even more effective use of Western-inspired

styles of association, management, and fund-raising. In the late 1910s, the Muhammadiyah began the patient construction of an institutional network that today comprises thousand of schools, dozens of hospitals, and some 166 faculties of higher education, most of which offer general professional as well as Islamic education.[79]

Political and economic developments in the 1950s and early 1960s gave added impetus to Muslim efforts to expand and modernize their school systems. In the early 1950s, the newly independent republican government embarked on its own school building program, and a degree from government schools quickly became a condition for employment in business and government.[80] As more Muslim parents opted to place their children in state schools, the Muslim sector's share of total enrollments plummeted. However, both traditionalist and modernist educators responded to the crisis with characteristic vigor, upgrading their commitment to general as well as religious education, and even adding high schools to their educational programs.

In 1975, the Islamic sector's growing involvement in secular education was given added impetus with the signing of a ministerial memorandum stipulating that all students in Muslim schools should receive a general elementary education of at least six years in addition to their religious studies. More generally, the memorandum sought to bring Islamic education up to the same standard as that maintained by nonreligious state schools by allowing students at Muslim schools to enter state colleges if they fulfilled the general-education requirements and passed an entrance examination. To achieve this parity, madrasas had to teach an assortment of required general courses and revise their curriculum so that 70 percent of the instructional day was devoted to general learning and 30 percent to religious.

In these and other ways, the 1975 agreement accelerated the trend of large pesantrens opening madrasas for the provision of general education. The agreement also encouraged madrasas to align their general curriculum with those of state public schools, and led the most prestigious boarding schools to add senior high schools and even college programs to their educational complexes. Meanwhile, since the late 1970s, enrollment in the Islamic educational sector has soared under the twin influences of the Islamic resurgence and the opening of Islamic schools' curricula to general studies. As demonstrated in these and other initiatives, Muslim educators in Indonesia

have taken enormous strides to break down the duality between general and Islamic education.

With regard to politics and public culture, the situation in Indonesia is more mixed. On one hand, the largest Muslim associations and school networks have demonstrated a proud commitment to the ideals of Indonesian nationalism, which are multiethnic and multireligious in form. During the 1990s, the leaders of Indonesia's two biggest associations, the Nahdlatul Ulama (35 million followers) and Muhammadiyah (25 million), became outspoken supporters of the democracy movement against President Soeharto. Although their current leadership is more conservative, these organizations remain pillars of Indonesian civil society still today. In line with this legacy, most of the country's 47,000 Islamic schools steer clear of direct political involvement, both on principled grounds and for the practical reason that the Muslim community itself does not line up behind any single party or ideology.

As I explain in Chapter 2, however, since the 1990s a small number of Islamic schools have developed qualities similar to what political theorists have recently come to describe as "social movements." Social movement schools aim not only to educate students but to use the networks and social idealism that result from education to build momentum for the transformation of society—as well as, typically, the state. The schools display another key feature highlighted in the literature on social movements. They provide "cultural frames" for diagnosing societal problems, recommend strategies for the problem's solution, and try to rally people to the proposed course of remedial action.

As with the school network now blossoming under the patronage of the moderately Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), many of these social movement schools have been inspired by a jurisprudentially conservative but tactically moderate wing of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Social movement schools of this sort, then, are not politically radical. Most subscribe to the notion that Islam and democracy can be compatible. Although they promote a deeper Islamization of public life, these schools are system-reforming rather than system-upending.

At the margins of the movement school network, however, are a small number of schools opposed to the existing form of the Indonesian state and demanding the formation of a totally different political order.

The ideologies and tactics of these radical schools vary. They range from Saudi-funded Salafiyyah schools, which now number some two hundred, to radical modernists like Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's al-Mukmin school in Ngruki, Central Java. What these schools have in common is the conviction that Islamic educators and the Muslim community as a whole must not resign themselves to the political status quo. The discourse these schools enunciate is not merely theoretical. From 1999 to 2003, radical Islamist schools played a central role in the campaign to dispatch *mujahidin* fighters to the Maluku region of eastern Indonesia, where their clashes with (equally violent) Christian gangs resulted in thousands of deaths.

Of Indonesia's 47,000 Islamic schools, antisystemic radicals represent only a tiny percentage of the whole, and, because their school enrollments average much less than their mainstream counterparts, their share of the total Muslim student population is even smaller. The polling data on a thousand educators that I present in Chapter 2 provides another gauge of how unrepresentative the radicals are. The data show that 86 percent of Muslim educators believe that democracy is the best form of government for Indonesia. Equally striking, the educators' support is neither formalistic nor based on a crudely majoritarian understanding of democracy, but extends to subtle civil rights, including support for the equality of all citizens before the law (94.2% support), freedom to join political organizations (82.5%), and legal protections for the media from arbitrary government action (92.8%).

At the same time, however, these survey data, supplemented by some two hundred in-depth interviews, indicate that most educators support the implementation of Islamic law—although precisely what this means is a matter of disagreement. Notwithstanding their stated commitment to democracy, 72.2 percent of the educators believe the state should be based on the Qur'an and Sunna and guided by religious experts; 82.8 percent think the state should work to implement the shari'a. Interestingly, however, when educators go into the polling booth on election day, the majority do not make implementation of the shari'a their first consideration in choosing a party.

These and other data suggest three things: first, that there is a deep reservoir of support for democratic governance among Indonesia's Muslim educators; second, that educators' commitment to the shari'a is almost as strong as that to democracy; and, third, there is

a vast "gray space" of cultural uncertainty, where Muslim educators and the public have yet to resolve just how to balance these two value commitments. A radical fringe in Indonesia may attempt to press their fellows toward a more immediate and totalizing resolution of this tension. But all evidence indicates that the public and educators are wary of anything hinting at extremism and prefer that these questions be resolved peacefully—and democratically.

Malaysia and the "Etatization" of Islamic Education

As described by Richard Kraince in Chapter 3, the situation in Malaysia shows how an Islamic school system initially quite similar to that in Indonesia has over the past century turned into something quite different. In the early twentieth century, Malaysia's Islamic schools resembled those in Indonesia, in that they were divided between traditionalist-dominated boarding schools (known in the Malaysian setting as *pondok*) and modernist-operated madrasas. But the educational situation was soon to change.

Although by the end of the nineteenth century the British had won control of most of the Malay peninsula, they left intact the regional sultanships that had exercised light-handed authority over much of the Malay population. Although day-to-day religious affairs had long been handled at the regional and village level rather than by rulers or Islamic courts, the British compensated the native sultans for their loss of sovereignty by awarding them responsibility for religious and customary affairs. The result was that, several decades prior to independence in 1957, Malay rulers had begun to develop an extensive administration for religious affairs.[81] At first, the Malay rulers and their administrators tended to side with Old Group traditionalists, at one point even forbidding public teaching on Islam without the sultan's written approval.[82]

As Kraince reminds us, opinion in elite Malay circles shifted toward New Group modernists in the aftermath of the First World War.[83] By that time, the Malay elite had begun to realize that British education offered greater opportunities than did Islamic schools for social advancement. In addition, one aspect of the religious bureaucracy's expansion was its appropriation of the local religious alms (*zakat*) on which Islamic boarding schools had heretofore depended. The loss of the zakat funds deprived the traditionalists of their economic independence and made

them more wary than their Dutch Indies counterparts of engaging in intellectual and educational reform.

After Malaysian independence in 1957, the madrasa wing of Islamic education held its own, but traditionalist boarding schools continued to decline. Ironically, the pondoks' fate was exacerbated by the national government's policy of mandating religious education in state schools. Chinese, Indian, and Christian Malaysians worried that the growing emphasis on Islamic education in otherwise "secular" schools would heighten ethnoreligious tensions.[84] Conversely, the insertion of Islamic instruction into public school curricula reassured Malay Muslim parents that public education would not estrange their children from their faith. Seeing that public education was not irreligious, and that state schools provided mobility into the more lucrative sectors of Malaysia's economy, growing numbers of Malay Muslim parents opted to send their children into the state school system.

In the 1990s and 2000s, political divisions within the Malay Muslim community also worked to the disadvantage of independent Islamic schools, now identified in government parlance as "people's religious schools" (SAR, *sekolah agama rakyat*). Rivalry between the dominant party in the ruling coalition, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), and conservative Islamists in the All-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), impacted the SARs negatively, especially after the government realized that many SARs had ties to PAS.[85] In an effort to undermine the opposition and improve educational opportunities for Muslim students, the federal government encouraged students planning to pursue Islamic studies to do so in institutions that followed a national curriculum and enjoyed federal or state support. Aided by parents' confidence that their children could receive good religious training in state schools, and by students' desire for vocational training, the government's efforts brought about a drastic decline in enrollments in Malaysia's independent Islamic schools.

The decline does not mean that Islamic instruction as a whole has faded from public life. Rather, over the past generation, the state has become the main provider of religious and moral education. Today all students in Malaysia are required to take five hours of classes each week on Islam (if they are Muslim) or moral education (if non-Muslim). Although Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi has used state schools to promote an anti–clash-of-civilizations program known as

"Civilizational Islam" (Islam Hadhari), the religious curriculum is vetted by Muslim scholars with their own ideas about human rights, gender equality, and the shari'a. As Kraince notes, non-Muslims and pluralist Muslims in groups like the feminist Sisters in Islam[86] have complained that, notwithstanding Badawi's impressive efforts, the state's religious curriculum is quite conservative. Inasmuch as this is the case, public religious developments in Malaysia bear a striking resemblance to those in Egypt. In both countries, the governing elite's efforts to coopt the Islamist opposition have resulted in the state's making large portions of the opposition's conservative religious platform its own.[87]

Islamic Education and Ethnoreligious Polarization in Southern Thailand

Government policies and Islamic schooling in southern Thailand have long resembled those in Malaysia, but, for political reasons, the outcome of their implementation has been entirely different.

As Virginia Matheson and M. B. Hooker have shown, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the province of Patani in southern Thailand was a renowned center of Islamic learning, producing some of Southeast Asia's most celebrated traditionalist scholars.[88] As Joseph Liow shows in Chapter 3, the types of Islamic schools found in southern Thailand resembled those in the nearby Malay peninsula. Decades later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the educational scene in southern Thailand also resembled that in Malaya, in that it was buffeted by the rivalry between Old Group traditionalists and New Group modernists. The main difference between Islamic education in these two countries has to do with the fact that in Malaysia Muslims are politically dominant, and Islam has been accorded a privileged place in national politics and culture. In Thailand, by contrast, the Muslim minority confronts a state that is centralizing, Buddhist-dominated, and intent on forging a national culture in which Islam is conspicuous by its absence.

From 1898 on, the educational policies pursued by Thai governments were openly assimilationist with regard to the country's non-Buddhist minorities, including adherents of traditional religions in northern Thailand as well as the Malay Muslims in the south. Unlike the tribal peoples in northern Thailand, however, the Malay

elite in the south had for several centuries seen itself as part of a broader Islamic ecumene. In the nineteenth century, this rather diffuse religious sensibility was brought into focus by high rates of pilgrimage from Patani to Arabia and the distinguished role of Patani scholars in the holy land. When, in 1921, Thai authorities introduced compulsory education, the Malay population feared that the state schools intended to divert local Muslims from Islam. Most parents boycotted the schools.[89]

In the face of continuing Malay intransigence, in 1961 the government resolved to work with rather than against the Islamic boarding schools. The state's Pondok Educational Improvement Program (PEIP) promised financial assistance to boarding schools that registered with the government, provided instruction in Thai, and adopted elements of the government curriculum. Although four hundred schools registered under the program, another one hundred closed or went underground. Rather than Thai-ifying the boarding schools, the government had unwittingly turned them into, in Liow's apt phrase, a "front line in the contest between Bangkok and the southern provinces."

Notwithstanding these tensions, by the 1970s southern Thailand's Islamic schools were changing in a way that seemed to indicate they might become a bridge between Muslims and the state rather than the front line in a culture war. One consequence of state efforts to bring pondok and madrasa education into alignment with national curricula was that Malay enrollments in national colleges soared. The establishment of two state-assisted Islamic colleges in the south, with plans for a third, was also well received in the Muslim community. The colleges were designed to provide higher education in Islam as well as courses on Islam for non-Muslims, including government officials posted to the south.

Other educational trends, however, showed that education and politics in the Muslim south were being buffeted by less integrative winds. Beginning in the 1980s, growing numbers of students opted to complete their religious education in the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia. According to reports that Islamic leaders provided Liow, today some twenty to forty schools in the south "promulgate Wahhabi teachings." The life history of the Saudi-trained reformist and Yala College rector Ismail Lutfi illustrate that not all of the Saudi-style

Salafis (Islamic reformists who model their efforts on the pious ancestors, i.e., the first three generations of Muslims) are anti-integrationist. Although Saudi trained, Lutfi is a gifted and warm speaker, and advocates a gradualist and contextualist approach to the understanding of Islamic law. But recent events have shown that, hardened by the heavy-handed tactics of the Thai authorities,[90] a small minority within the Islamic school system has concluded that compromise with the state is no longer an option.

On matters of gender, Liow points out that Saudi-inspired Salafis do not differ greatly from traditionalist scholars or New Group reformists. Although in Indonesia it is not at all unusual to meet traditionalist thinkers and activists who promote gender-equitable interpretations of Islam (although it must be said that even in Indonesia this remains a minority trend, as many boarding schools continue to use kitabs with inegalitarian gender messages),[91] such gender liberalism is virtually unknown in southern Thailand. Scholars of all stripes subscribe to conservative interpretations of women's roles. As in many other Muslim countries, official gender conservatism has not prevented far-reaching changes in women's roles, not least of which regard their participation in education. Indeed, as Liow observes, in modernized Islamic schools female students typically outnumber males.

Another development to which Liow draws our attention is the rapid growth of the Tablighi Jemaah. Founded in India in the early decades of the twentieth century, the Tablighi Jemaah is a pietistic movement of a gently conservative sort that, since the 1960s, has turned itself into one of the largest transnational Islamic movements in the world. Its aims are simple and ostensibly nonpolitical. Tablighis aspire to lead Muslims to a purer profession of their faith by modeling all aspects of their lives on the Prophet Muhammad and his companions.[92] Of course, where other Muslims disagree on just how this modeling should work, arguments over religious authenticity can quickly turn political. For tactical as well as jurisprudential reasons, however, Tablighis attempt to keep this religious politics clear of the state.

Tablighis first came to Thailand in the 1960s by way of Malaysia. It was only in the 1980s, however, that the movement became a mass-based organization. As in neighboring Cambodia (but not the Malay peninsula, where the movement is primarily a phenomenon of the urban middle class), Tablighi preachers travel so frequently to the

countryside that, as Liow observes, they "visit most, if not all, of the villages in the southern provinces at least once a week, typically approaching every household in the village." The movement works hard to recruit local leaders and transports the best of them to Pakistan for education. New leaders also receive training in Urdu, the language of global Tablighism. As in Cambodia, which also has a large Tablighi community, the Tablighi advance has raised tempers in other Muslim circles, not least of all among Saudi-oriented Salafis.

In comparison with Malaysia or even Indonesia, then, Islamic education in southern Thailand is in a deeply unsettled state. Tied as its evolution is to political events, its future also remains unclear.[93] Fueled by a sense of political disenfranchisement, Malays in Thailand have come to see Islamic schools as both symbols and instruments of resistance to Thai authority. One cannot emphasize too strongly, however, that the schools are not the cause of the political violence afflicting southern Thailand today. Education remains a key instrument in the Malay population's efforts to maintain a distinct ethnoreligious identity, however, and will be central to any effort to resolve the region's crisis.

Cambodia: Islamic Education after the Collapse

The situation described by Bjorn Blengsli in Cambodia is arguably one of the most unusual in Muslim Asia. Historically speaking, Cambodia's small Muslim population was divided between two primary ethnic communities, the Cham (descendants of fifteenth-century immigrants from coastal Vietnam) and the Chvea (descendants of Malay immigrants from Sumatra and the Malay peninsula). There is also a small subgroup of Cham known as the Imam San who see themselves as keepers of ancient (and largely syncretic) rituals, though today they blend this older heritage with more reformed traditions of knowledge. The Imam San are an example of normatively heterodox Muslims, like the abangan in Java during the 1950s or the Wetu Telu of pre-1970s Lombok,[94] whose numbers in modern times have dwindled in the face of vigorous campaigns of Islamic reform.

As in southern Thailand, a region to which it has long had ties, Islamic schooling in Cambodia underwent far-reaching changes in the first decades of the twentieth century under the influence of Malay preachers from Malaya and southern Thailand. Cambodian Muslims had long had village-based institutions for Qur'anic recitation, but

they lacked schools for intermediate to advanced study in the Islamic sciences. Islamic boarding schools on the model of Malay pondoks were only finally established in the early twentieth century, making the study of kitab kuning texts broadly available for the first time. Tellingly, when engaged in religious study, Cambodian Muslims used Malay, not their own dialects. From the 1930s on, growing numbers of Cambodian Muslims also went to southern Thailand and Malaya to pursue religious studies. By 1940, it is estimated that five hundred Cambodian Muslims had made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

After World War II, returned pilgrims led the way in establishing schools for more advanced religious study. A reformed variant of the Malay boarding school was also established, one that combined intermediate study in the Islamic sciences with fixed curricula and printed books. A few years later, however, the reformed pondoks were themselves challenged by another Malay-inspired innovation: madrasas combining general and religious education. Modeling themselves on New Group (Kaum Tua) reformists in Malaya and southern Thailand, Cambodia's reformists decried the alleged backwardness of their traditionalist rivals as well as the latter's irreligious "innovations." As also in Malaya, the New Group–Old Group rivalry sundered families and communities. Still today, Cambodian Muslims talk about other varieties of Islam through the prism of this early-twentieth-century schism, even where, as with the Tablighis and Saudi-influenced Salafis, the movements in question do not actually fit easily into either camp.

These latter reform movements arrived on the Cambodian scene in the aftermath of the catastrophic destruction of Islamic institutions wrought by Pol Pot's Democratic Kampuchea (DK, 1975–1979). Some 1.7 million Cambodians died during the DK period, but Cambodia's small Muslim minority was singled out for especially brutal treatment. Only a handful of mosques and a few dozen Islamic scholars survived the era's devastation.

In the aftermath of the DK horrors, the Malaysian government was the first to provide assistance to the traumatized Muslim community, rebuilding schools and mosques, and offering scholarships to promising young students. In 1989, the Tablighi Jemaah arrived as well, launching an ambitious, village-based program for the re-Islamization of Cambodian Muslim society. Yet another example of the growing influence of globalized Muslim movements in Southeast Asia, today

the group's annual meetings attract thousands of Cambodian Muslims as well as hundreds of Tablighis from South Asia and nearby parts of Southeast Asia.

In the mid-1990s, a Kuwait-based Salafiyyah organization also arrived on the Cambodian scene, the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS). Comprised of conservative Salafis active around the Muslim world, the RIHS used development assistance, mosque building, orphanages, and school programs to promote scripturalist piety. The RIHS' vision of Islam is strikingly un-local, premised on, as Blengsli puts it, "a version of Islam which is supposed to be un-contaminated by local culture."

In the late 1990s, a Saudi-based Salafiyyah organization also arrived in Cambodia, and it too emphasized a scripturalist approach to Islam. The group was the Umm al-Qura Charitable Organization, the organization shut down by government authorities in 2003 after allegations that it had lent support to terrorists.

Of all these new organizations, the RIHS has had the greatest influence in the educational sphere. It has also been the least hesitant to condemn indigenous Muslim customs, which it sees as un-Islamic. The RIHS' denunciations eventually prompted Cambodia's native Muslim leadership to appeal to the government to take action against it. Faced with the prospect of government censure, the RIHS has toned down its criticisms and encouraged its members to join the government-linked Cambodian People's Party. These accommodations have done little, however, to defuse the simmering tensions in the Muslim community.

Although for the moment the Salafis find themselves at something of a political disadvantage, educationally they have the upper hand. In a pattern without parallel elsewhere in Muslim Southeast Asia, Salafi schools today educate some 50 percent of Cambodian Muslim youth. By appealing to the government for protection, the indigenous Sunni establishment has for the moment slowed Salafi progress. But the future is not likely to diminish the Salafis' determination, or reverse the disastrous decline of traditionalist Islam in Cambodia.

Insurgency and Pragmatism in the Philippines

At first blush, the Philippines is the Southeast Asian country where one would most expect Islamic education to be politicized and radical. After all, the Muslim south of this country has had an on-again,

off-again insurgency for more than thirty years. There are an estimated fifteen thousand Muslim regulars doing battle with government forces, and another hundred thousand trained militia members willing to provide backup to the regulars.[95] However, as Thomas McKenna and Esmael A. Abdula explain in Chapter 6, all evidence indicates that the conflict in the south has not led to any serious radicalization of Islamic education. On matters of religious schooling, parents and educators alike show a level-headed pragmatism. No less surprising, and again notwithstanding the thirty-year insurgency, no political party or umbrella organization has been able to seize control of the decentralized religious school system. Until the recent establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), Islamic schooling was managed at the local level, and school directors were justly famous for their independent-mindedness.

Until the early twentieth century, the Philippines had no educational institution for intermediate or advanced Islamic learning comparable to the Javanese pesantren or the Malay pondok. What little formal Islamic education there was took place in loosely organized *pandita* schools. In Philippine Muslim languages, *pandita* refers to a ritual specialist who possesses some type of esoteric religious knowledge (*ilmu;* Ar. *'ilm*). Not schools in the formal sense of the term, the pandita schools were Philippine variations on the learning circles used for elementary Qur'anic recitation across Southeast Asia.[96] Although a few scholars may have made the trek to Malaya or the Middle East for religious study, their influence after returning was limited, and the southern Philippines remained one of Muslim Southeast Asia's educational backwaters.

After pacifying the Muslim south in the early 1900s at a cost of thousands of native lives,[97] the Americans established a cooperative relationship with local Muslim big-men (*datus*). The American administration relied on the datus to introduce a centralized government administration in the south, something the Philippines' former Spanish rulers had never managed to do. Fearing unrest, the American administration opted to block the establishment of large capitalist plantations in the south. However, the Americans did encourage a movement of Christian Filipino settlers from the impoverished north into the south's lightly populated forest lands. During the American colonial period, the program's impact on the south's Muslims remained

modest. However, under the Philippine Commonwealth (1935) and the postwar Republic (1945) the program altered the demographic balance in Mindanao, the largest of the southern islands, making Muslims a minority in their homeland. The influx of Christian settlers and bosses was to be one of the catalysts for the Muslim separatist movement that flared up in the 1960s and 1970s. The Americans also introduced public education for the Philippine Muslim elite. Contrary to the Dutch policy in the Indies, which sought to reinforce ethnic divisions, the Americans hoped that education would promote a sense of unity among the south's fissiparous ethnic groups and propel them forward to "civilization."[98]

Beginning in the commonwealth period, the Christian-led government resolved to use public education in an even more interventionist manner, promoting a unitary national culture at the expense of the south's Muslim identities. In 1935, President Manuel Quezon declared that "the so-called Moro Problem is a thing of the past" and announced the establishment of educational programs designed to assimilate Muslims into Filipino culture.[99] Scholarship programs brought elite Muslims to Manila for college, while in the south large numbers of commoner Muslims enrolled in public schools. Owing to their positive experience with American-sponsored schools, Philippine Muslims showed little of the hesitation their counterparts in southern Thailand displayed toward general education. However, political events in the 1960s and 1970s were to reverse this progress toward Muslim-Christian accommodation, culminating in the outbreak of separatist hostilities in 1972.

In 1976, the government of Ferdinand Marcos reached a tentative agreement with the Muslim rebels. The accord gave Muslims the right to set up schools consistent with Muslim values in their own territories; the policy was reaffirmed in the constitutional revisions of 1986 and with the official establishment of the ARMM. For most of this period, however, the violence in the south made implementation of the educational provisions of the accord impossible. Nonetheless, when the conflict began to subside, the ARMM took steps to reinvigorate Islamic education by, among other things, introducing an "integrated" curriculum that combined religious with general education.[100]

As McKenna and Abdula show, the Muslim public's interest in reformed Islamic education was a postwar development driven by two

big changes. The first was an economic boom in the south, one result of which was a tendency on the part of elite Muslims to invest some of their wealth in Islamic activities. Growing numbers of Muslims made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Upon returning to the south, many added to their religious luster by building mosques and madrasas. The new madrasas differed from traditional pandita schools in emphasizing the understanding of Arabic rather than simple recitation of the Qur'an. The new schools also stressed the need for a more doctrinally objectified understanding of Islam. Meanwhile, the Muslim elite's interest in promoting Islam also grew as a result of state-sponsored Christian migration to the Muslim south. As the flow of migrants from the Christian north placed them at a demographic and political disadvantage, Muslims responded with a boundary-maintaining assertion of their religious identity.

The second major influence on the postwar surge in Islamic education was the strengthening of ties between the southern Philippines and the Middle East. In 1950, the government of Egypt began to send missionaries trained at al-Azhar University to the Philippines to teach in madrasas funded by local notables. In 1955, the Egyptian government launched a scholarship program to allow local Muslims to study at Cairo's famed al-Azhar; by 1978, two hundred local young men had taken advantage of the program. Most of the program's graduates returned to the Philippines to teach in madrasas. After the 1976 ceasefire agreement, additional aid flowed into the south from Saudi Arabia and Libya. "This new funding," McKenna and Abdula observe, "allowed the Middle East graduates . . . to open madrasas without relying on the patronage of traditional leaders." Although the separatist struggle of the 1970s slowed the pace of madrasa development, eventually hundreds of schools were built. By the mid-1980s, a new class of well-educated reformists had emerged and was challenging local understandings of Islam.

Today, Islamic education in the Muslim south comes in many forms, including weekend supplements for students in public schools, full-time madrasas, and new academies that blend general and religious education. Most students attend community madrasas of the two-day-a-week sort, while attending regular public schools the rest of the week. Even for students who attend full-time Islamic schools, English tracks remain the more popular educational option. As in other parts of Mus-

lim Southeast Asia, another striking development in recent years has been the expansion of Islamic higher education. One more sign of the times, 70–90 percent of the students in these programs are women. Most hope to use their educational training to serve as teachers of Arabic in the government-sponsored Islamic school system.

In all these regards, Islamic education in the Philippines offers a striking example of the flexibility and practicality characteristic of Muslim education in most of Southeast Asia. Parents appreciate Islamic education for its ability to instill piety and a religious identity in an unstable world in which neither can be taken for granted. At the same time, parents want their offspring to acquire marketable skills. Islamic schools aim to strike a balance between these two valued ends. Meanwhile, McKenna and Abdula note, "despite vague claims by the Philippine government and military . . . no direct link has been established between Philippine madrasas and Islamist extremist groups." They point to the bittersweet irony that Abdulrajak Janjalani, the founder of Abu Sayyaf (the Philippine's most notorious terrorist group) was "a product of a Jesuit high school, not a madrasa."

In an educational system notable for its pragmatism, there is still one worrying note. It is that both state schools and Muslim schools in the southern Philippines are mostly silent on matters of religious diversity and interreligious dialogue. As another analyst of Philippine Islamic schools has observed, "The Islamization of education in Muslim Mindanao could reinforce Filipino Muslim bias against their Christian fellow citizens, while the lack of a multicultural education that promotes positive awareness of Islam in the rest of the country fails to address Filipino Christian biases against their Muslim fellow citizens."[101] The challenge of striking a balance between self-affirmation and tolerance of the "other" is one with which Muslims and non-Muslims in other parts of Southeast Asia continue to grapple as well.

CONCLUSION

The studies in this volume point to several conclusions. First, and most generally, Islamic education in these countries is neither unchanging nor backward-looking. On the contrary, it has been in the throes of far-reaching change for more than a century. Unlike their counterparts in the Muslim Middle East, however, at the dawn of the modern era Southeast Asian Muslims did not yet have a network of madrasas in

place for intermediate and advanced religious study. In earlier times, royal courts may have sponsored study circles for some specialized learning, and a few scholars made the trek to Arabia for study. The presence of more or less orthodox legal digests in western portions of the archipelago also indicates that a few scholars had been familiar with portions of the law since at least the seventeenth century.[102] Until the nineteenth century (and even later in some regions), however, popular Islamic culture showed the imprint of raja-centric ceremony and a pantheistic folk Islam more than it did sustained engagement with the Islamic sciences. In this portion of the Muslim world, then, advanced Islamic education and the school-leveraged recentering of Islam have both been recent developments, products of a sustained engagement with a distinctly Muslim modernity.

Public Islamic culture began to change in the first decades of the nineteenth century, as growing numbers of pilgrims from self-consciously Islamic portions of the archipelago like Aceh, West Sumatra, Banten, and Singapore began to make the journey to the holy land. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, the trickle turned into a flood, as steamships speeded the passage to the Middle East and commercial trade and cash crops provided growing numbers of Muslims with disposable income. The new culture of print Islam appeared on the scene during these years, too, as Malay-language presses in Mecca, Cairo, and Istanbul made religious tracts less expensive and more available. By the end of the nineteenth century, printing presses were broadcasting their cultural wares from the archipelago's booming urban centers. The new medium only furthered the progress of a delocalized profession of Islam.

It was here, too, at the interstices of a pluralizing Southeast Asia, that the first generation of modern reformists, the New Group (Kaum Muda) Muslims, arose. The New Group decried traditionalist Islam as corrupt, inauthentic, and out of step with the age. New Groupists called for a return to Islam's sources, the Qur'an and Sunna, and a new spirit of independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) rather than imitation (*taqlid*). The reformers also called for women's education as well as stricter controls on women's dress; a deeper Muslim engagement with modern science; new forms of civic association; and a clearer and more objectified sense of what is and what is not "Islam." In the absence of an Islamic state, and faced with non-Mus-

lim rulers, the institution that was to empower Muslim learning and society was the madrasa, a modern school combining general education with the religious.

Notwithstanding their blanket denunciations of traditionalist learning, the New Group Muslims were not the only agents of religious and educational reform. In the final decades of the nineteenth century, Old Group traditionalists in central and western areas of the archipelago initiated their own educational innovations. They distanced themselves from pantheistic variants of Sufism, adopting a more shari'a-minded mysticism.[103] With colonialism's advance, they shifted their boarding schools from urban courts to the countryside, and took their message of piety and moral community to rural populations heretofore only vaguely familiar with translocal Islam. By the end of the nineteenth century, Islamic boarding schools had spread across most of Muslim Southeast Asia, with the notable exception of the Philippines, where advanced religious education became widely available only after the Second World War. The new Islamic schools laid the foundation for the twentieth century's great Islamic revival. By the end of that century, the syncretism and pantheistic Sufism for which this region had once been renowned had greatly declined.

The second conclusion that stands out from these studies is that, in addition to showing the effects of pietistic reform, Islamic education in the twentieth century showed the imprint of three uniquely modern influences: the developmentalist state (in both its colonial and postcolonial forms); the capitalist marketplace; and mass education. In the early twentieth century, the state that Muslim educators faced was colonial and non-Muslim. Unlike their counterparts in the Ottoman lands and Iran, but like Muslims in India,[104] then, Southeast Asian Muslims could not look to native rulers for guidance as to how they should build their schools. They turned instead to Middle Eastern countries and to the public and Christian schools introduced by Western colonizers. In Thailand and Cambodia, Muslim educators learned from schools imposed by non-Muslim rulers.

In the postcolonial period, the threat of conversion or colonial exploitation diminished, but the challenge of the state to Islamic education did not. The postcolonial state was a nation-state, premised on the alluring but eminently contestable idea that citizens should share a common culture. To this end, as in other parts of the modern world,[105]

the new nation-states used mass education in an effort to create appropriately socialized citizens. This effort challenged Islamic education to its core. The historic mission of Islamic schools had been, not to buttress a developmentalist state, but to create pious and knowledgeable Muslims, with a sense of allegiance to the community of believers (*umma*), however it be defined.

The national school systems introduced by Southeast Asia's postcolonial states adopted varied approaches to the existing network of Islamic schools. Tellingly, however, none at first made a serious effort to draw privately owned Islamic schools into the project of citizen making. Even in Muslim-majority Indonesia and Malaysia, the postcolonial state attempted an end run around Islamic schools, building a state school system in which the terms of the new national culture could be imparted without compromise. In Thailand and the Philippines, Muslims faced, not just an indifferent state, but one intent on using public education to replant the Muslim public's solidarities elsewhere than in the umma.

State-based education caused a crisis of Islamic education as great as any experienced in the colonial era. Although madrasas survived, boarding schools in Malaysia fell into steep decline. Even in Indonesia, which had the region's most resilient boarding school system, enrollments at first declined, as parents opted to send their children to public schools. In southern Thailand, the Philippines, and Cambodia, the threat to the Muslim minority led many parents to rally to the defense of Islamic schools. Nonetheless, across Southeast Asia in the 1950s and early 1960s, policy analysts and government officials predicted that it was only a matter of time before Islamic education would decline in the face of a secularist juggernaut.

In most of Muslim Southeast Asia, however, the predicted collapse did not take place. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a resurgence of piety and religious education across the region. The institutional expression of the change varied by country. In Malaysia, private Islamic education declined while Islamic lessons in public schools boomed, to the consternation of the country's non-Muslim minorities. In southern Thailand, Islamic schools reached a tentative agreement with the Thai state, integrating general education into their curriculum. But the achievement was eventually compromised by the south's continuing poverty, the government's heavy-handed repression, and sputtering

violence from an insurgent fringe. In contrast, and notwithstanding a thirty-year insurgency, Muslim parents and educators in the Philippines showed a remarkable pragmatism. Most parents put their children in Islamic schools during weekends, leaving the remainder of the week to public education. The growing number of Middle Eastern–trained teachers did lead to a less accommodating practice of Islam, but one still not prone to absolutist exclusivity.

In Cambodia, the havoc wrought by Revolutionary Kampuchea (1975–1979) delayed the Islamic resurgence; indeed, it almost destroyed the umma. The devastation opened the door to Muslim foreign aid after the RK collapse, some of which encouraged a drift to Saudi-influenced Salafist exclusivity.

In Indonesia, finally, the resurgence created an Islamic educational renaissance, marked by an eager embrace of general education, greater intellectual openness, and Muslim engagements with the ideals of democracy and pluralism. However, the period also witnessed the rise of social-movement rejectionists as well. Though they comprised only a small proportion of the whole, their influence grew to the extent that post-Soeharto politics proved incapable of addressing Indonesia's lingering challenges of poverty, corruption, and social pluralism. Now a decade into the post-Soeharto transition, Indonesia's Islamic educational system is showing signs once more of renewed confidence.

These examples show that Islamic schools across Southeast Asia are varied but, with the qualified exception of Malaysia, share the characteristic of having weathered the postcolonial storm. Often overlooked in discussions of Islamic education, one development more than any other facilitated this success. It was not radical Islamism or an unstinting struggle to implement shari'a. It was something simpler yet, from an epistemological point of view, more momentous: a confidence on the part of Muslim educators and the public that there is no opposition between general and Islamic learning. Here was a transformation that opened Islamic education to a critical engagement with the plural and unstable intellectual horizons of the modern world.

Today the consensus on the wisdom of this opening remains securely in place with regard to primary and secondary education, as evidenced in the enthusiasm of Muslim parents for general as well as religious education. In some segments of Islamic higher education, however, a small but vocal minority insists that, in their current

incarnations, modern science and the humanities are so intrinsically secular as to be incompatible with Islam.[106] Although this is a minority view, it is a vigorously argued one. Its proponents are also able to draw on the resources of well-funded donors in the Middle East to promote their point of view. The issue of the Islamization of the academy will remain a topic of debate for some time to come, and it may become more heated before it cools down.

A third and final conclusion concerns Islamic schools and politics. The dynamism that Muslim educators have shown should dispel once and for all the illusion that the educational mainstream in this region is narrow-minded or absolutist. In Southeast Asia as in most of the Muslim world, Islamic education bears the imprint of an engagement with, not just the sources of Islamic tradition, but the demands and opportunities of the modern age. In its seriousness and versatility, the most apt comparison for Islamic education in Southeast Asia is not medieval scholasticism but Roman Catholic educators' efforts in the twentieth-century United States to respond to a world not entirely of their choosing but in which they were determined to prevail.[107]

But one difference, a relative rather than absolute one, remains. It is that, since the late nineteenth century, many among Southeast Asia's Islamic schools have not shied away from but encouraged involvement in politics and public affairs. The tendency should not be exaggerated; nor, least of all, should it be understood as implying an interest in radical politics. There was no lock-step uniformity to this disposition; nor will there be in the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, by comparison with their Christian counterparts in the late-modern Western world, Islamic schools in Southeast Asia have shown less hesitation about enjoining participation in politics and public life. We hear in this a perhaps not distant echo of the first principle of Islamic ethics, as affirmed in jurisprudence: that it is the duty of all believers to "command right and forbid wrong" (Ar. *al-amr bi'l-ma'rûf wa'-nahy 'an al munkr*).

As the historian Michael Cook has explained, this principle is deeply rooted in Qur'anic tradition. Its political sociology is interesting as well. To quote Cook, the principle implies "that an executive power of the law of God is vested in each and every Muslim." As a result, "the individual believer as such has not only the right, but also the duty, to issue orders pursuant to God's law, and to do what he can to see that they are obeyed."[108] Although its interpretation varies, no principle of

Islamic public ethics is as widely cited as this one. None also better illustrates just why efforts to sell Muslim educators the secular liberal notions of religion and ethics—with their assumption that ethics are above all a private matter—typically meet with unease.

Again, however, Muslim educators' conviction that religious education should be relevant to public affairs is not unique to their tradition;[109] nor has it led to a seamless consensus as to what Muslim politics should be. Though easy to invoke, the principle of commanding right and forbidding wrong is not easy to apply. It is not this search for public relevances, then, that should be a matter of concern when reflecting on the future of Muslim education and politics in Southeast Asia. Rather, it is the tendency of a small fringe to interpret Muslim ethics and knowledge in an exclusive and absolutist way.

Over the long term, the best antidote to this latter challenge will be the one preferred by the great majority of Muslim educators in contemporary Southeast Asia: not repression, but efforts to make existing educational and political institutions operate more openly and vigorously. For the indefinite future, Muslims in this part of the world will continue to debate the proper forms public ethics and politics should take. Muslim schools will be one of the main sites of argument. The paradigmatic institution of our age, however, the school also holds the best promise for a peaceful and pluralist resolution of the debate.

NOTES

1. On the Jemaah Islamiyah, see "Al-Qaeda in Southeast Asia: The Case of the 'Ngruki Network' in Indonesia" (Jakarta/Brussels: ICG Indonesia Briefing, August 8, 2002); "Indonesia Backgrounder: How the *Jemaah Islamiyah* Terrorist Network Operates" (Jakarta/Brussels: Asia Report No. 43, December 11, 2002); and "Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia: Damaged But Still Dangerous" (Jakarta/Brussels: Asia Report, No. 63, August 26, 2003). On the financing of JI operations, see, Zachary Abuza, *Funding Terrorism in Southeast Asia: The Financial Network of Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah* (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2003).

2. "Thailand: Education in the South Engulfed in Fear: Teachers Targeted in Spiral of Reprisal Killings and Violence" (New York: Internet E-mail Flyer, Human Rights Watch Asia, June 14, 2007).

3. See McKenna, Chapter 6 in this volume. The quote is from "Defense, Deped to Look into *Madrasah*'s Alleged Role in Breeding Terrorists," *MindaNews,* vol. 2, no. 40, June 16, 2003.

4. See Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

5. See "Sidik Jari Kalla Menggoyang Pondok" [Kalla's Fingerprints Shake the Islamic Boarding Schools], *Tempo,* December 18, 2005, pp. 38–39.

6. The small kingdom of Brunei on the island of Borneo is also a Muslim-majority state, and Singapore and Burma have small Muslim minorities; Vietnam's is even smaller. Because of limited funds and the intensity of the discussion surrounding Muslim schools in the focus countries, the project was limited to the five cases discussed in this book.

7. See Azyumardi Azara, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa: Muslim Schools and National Ideals in Indonesia," in Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, eds., *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 172–98; and Jajat Burhanudin and Dina Afrianty, eds., *Mencetak Muslim Modern: Peta Pendidikan Islam Indonesia* [Producing Modern Muslims: Mapping Islamic Education in Indonesia] (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2006).

8. Although I touch on the results from the 2006 survey in Chapter 2 of this book, I will provide a fuller discussion of the survey in a later book.

9. See Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848–1945,* vol. 2: *Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

10. Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (January 1960): 228–49 (quotation is from p. 231).

11. Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 5.

12. For thoughtful introductions to the history and interpretation of the Qur'an, see Bruce Lawrence, *The Qur'an: A Biography* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), and Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'ân: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

13. See Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 29; and Claude Guillot, "Creation of a Fixed Text," in Jane Dammen McAuliffe, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 41–57. For a slightly different chronology, see Jonathan Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 59.

14. This was the case, for example, in late-nineteenth-century Egypt. See Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1998), p. 29.

15. *Pengajian Qur'an* may also refer to less elementary forms of Qur'anic study, where formal methods for interpreting the text are also studied.

16. On the role of the *kuttab* in the Middle East, see Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work,* pp. 27, 36–38, 48; and Dale F. Eickelman, *Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. 50. On Qur'anic recitation in Indonesia, see Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Qur'ân in Indonesia* (Hololulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

17. On this process, see Norman Calder, *Studies in Early Islamic Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 164, and Wael B. Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunnî usûl al-fiqh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 7–35.

18. Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge,* p. 7; and Marc Gaborieau, "Introduction," in Nicole Grandin and Marc Gaborieau, eds., *Madrasa: La transmission du savoir dans le monde musulman* (Paris: Éditions Arguments, 1997), pp. 1–10.

19. Berkey, *Formation of Islam,* p. 187.

20. See Bulliet, *Islam,* pp. 148–49.

21. The inclusion of medicine and astronomy in the early madrasa curriculum appears to have been more common in the Islamic northeast (Turkey to northern India) than in the Arab Middle East. See Roy Mottahedeh, "The Transmission of Learning: The Role of the Islamic Northeast," in Nicole Grandin and Marc Gaborieau, eds., *Madrasa: La transmission du savoir dans le monde musulman* (Paris: Éditions Arguments, 1997), p. 61; and Said Amir Arjomand, "The Law, Agency, and Policy in Medieval Islamic Society: Development of the Institutions of Learning from the Tenth to the Fifteenth Century," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41, no. 2 (April 1999): 263–93.

22. For comparative studies on saint shrines and pilgrimage, see Henri Chambert-Loir and Claude Guillot, eds., *Le culte des saints dans le monde musulman* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1995).

23. On early madrasas and the *ziyarah* complex, see R. Hillenbrand, "Madrasa Architecture," in *Encyclopedia of Islam,* vol. 5, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), pp. 1136–54. On shayks, pilgrimage, and barakah, see Christopher S. Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous: Ziyâra and the Veneration of Muslim Saints in Late Medieval Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), pp. 127–67. On the conflict of interpretations surrounding saint shrines in Southeast Asia, see John R. Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse: Religion and Ritual in Gayo Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 30–31, and Ronald Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad: Negotiating Identity and Modernity in Muslim Java* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), pp. 28–33.

24. Jonathan Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge,* p. 17. The personalized and charismatic bases of traditional education are vividly captured in two anthropological studies: Dale Eickelman's portrait of a Moroccan religious notable in *Knowledge and Power,* pp. 91–98, and, for Java, Lukens-Bull's *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 2–5.

25. The situation in Indo-Turko-Persian madrasas could be different, as illustrated in Francis Robinson's *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001), chap. 1.

26. On the place of the foreign sciences in the premodern madrasas, see A. I. Sabra, "The Appropriation and Subsequent Naturalization of Greek Science in Medieval Islam," *History of Science* 25 (1987): 223–43.

27. See David C. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1450* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), esp. pp. 161–213.

28. The decline was relative but not absolute. At some madrasas and at some of the libraries for which the medieval Muslim Middle East was famous, works in the natural sciences and philosophy were still available, and some lawyers, philosophers, and, especially, doctors continued to consult them. See George Madkisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), p. 79; and Toby Huff, *The Rise of Early Modern Science: Islam, China, and The West,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 53, 63, 70.

29. Huff, *Rise of Early Modern Science,* p. 70.

30. Bulliet, *Islam: The View,* p. 21.

31. Berkey, *The Formation of Islam,* p. 229.

32. The phrase is Berkey's, *Formation of Islam,* p. 189.

33. On literacy and formal education in the premodern Middle East, see Carter Vaughn Findley, "Knowledge and Education in the Modern Middle East: A Comparative View," in Georges Sabagh, *The Modern Economic and Social History of the Middle East in Its World Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 130–54.

34. See Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge,* p. 244.

35. See Berkey, *Formation of Islam,* p. 245.

36. The concept of social "disciplining" to which I refer here has affinities with the discussions of rationalization in Max Weber and religion-as-discipline in Talal Asad. See Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1993); on rationalization in Weber, see my "World Building and the Rationality of Conversion," in Robert W. Hefner, ed., *Conversion to Christianity: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives on a Great Transformation* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 3–44.

37. See Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450–1680,* vol. 2: *Expansion and Crisis* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 132.

38. See Anthony Milner, *The Invention of Politics in Colonial Malaya: Contesting Nationalism and the Expansion of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 186; Mark Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative Piety and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1989), pp. 32–34; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce,* 2:170–72; and Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Patani* (Bangi, Malaysia: Kebangsaan University Press, 1999), p. 14.

39. A striking example of a ruler's mediation in religious disputes occurred during the debate between Nur al-Din al-Raniri (a native of Gujarat who came to live in Aceh) and followers of the great monist Sufi, Shams al-Din al-Sumatrani, at the court of Sultan Iskandar Thani of Aceh, sometime after 1637. See Peter Riddell, *Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World* (London: Hurst and Company, 2001), p. 123, and S. M. Naguib al-Attas, *A Commentary on the Hujjat al-Siddiq of Nur al-Din al-Raniri* (Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Culture, 1986).

40. Milner, *Invention of Politics,* p. 146. See also his "Islam and the Muslim State," in M. B. Hooker, ed., *Islam in South-East Asia* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983), pp. 23–49; and Woodward, *Islam in Java,* p. 57: "[T]he Indo-Persian systems of northern India provided the models for the Javanese imperial formulation of Islam."

41. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce,* 2:171.

42. Milner observes wryly that in peninsular Malaya's sultanates, the legal digests begin with, not God's law, but discussions of the sumptuary laws that distinguish among kings, commoners, and slaves. See Milner, *Invention of Politics,* p. 148.

43. Ibid., p. 150.

44. For an infamous example of royal repression of ulama, see Woodward, *Islam in Java,* p. 60, and B. Vlekke, *Nusantara* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), p. 175.

45. See Robert W. Hefner, *Hindu Javanese: Tengger Tradition and Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).

46. See Martin van Bruinessen, "Global and Local in Indonesian Islam," *Southeast Asian Studies* (Kyoto) 37:2 (1999): 46–63; Th. G. Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java,* vol. 1: *Synopsis of Javanese Literature 900–1900 A.D.* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), pp. 78, 95; Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce,* 2:181–83.

47. On court-sponsored rituals of a strongly syncretic cast, see Stephen C. Headley, *Durga's Mosque: Cosmology, Conversion and Community in Central Javanese Islam* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2004), esp. pp. 282–320; and Woodward, *Islam in Java,* p. 168. On the trials and tribulations of Malay ritual specialists in modern times, see Carol Lader-

man, *Taming the Wind of Desire: Psychology, Medicine, and Aesthetics in Malay Shamanistic Performance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); and Michael G. Peletz, "'Ordinary Muslims' and Muslim Resurgents in Contemporary Malaysia: Notes on an Ambivalent Relationship," in Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvatich, eds., *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslim Southeast Asia,* pp. 231–73 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), pp. 231–73. For a discussion in a Javanese context, see Robert W. Hefner, "Islamizing Java? Religion and Politics in Rural East Java," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46, no. 3 (August 1987): 533–54.

48. On the *bissu* (a transgendered ritual priest in South Sulawesi), see Sharyn Graham Davies, *Challenging Gender Norms: Five Genders among Bugis of Indonesia* (San José: Wadsworth Publishing, 2006); and Gilbert Hamonic, *Le langage des dieux: Cultes et pouvoirs pré-islamique en Pays Bugis, Célèbes-Sud, Indonésie* (Paris: Éditions CNRS, 1987).

49. For contemporary ethnographic studies of the fate of nonstandard traditions of Islamic knowledge in the face of Islamic reform see, in a Malay setting, Laderman, *Taming the Wind of Desire;* in a Javanese setting, Robert W. Hefner, "The Political Economy of Islamic Conversion in Modern East Java," in William R. Roff, *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning: Comparative Studies of Muslim Discourse* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 53–78; and, among the Sasak of Lombok in Indonesia, Sven Cederroth, *The Spell of the Ancestors and the Power of Mekkah: A Sasak Community on Lombok* (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1981).

50. The phrase is from Milner, "Islam and the Muslim State," p. 31.

51. For a historical review of qadis and the application of Islamic law in precolonial Southeast Asia, see Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia,* 2:142–47, and, for family law, pp. 147–57. On kingship and Islamic law, see Milner, "Islam and the Muslim State," pp. 23–49, esp. 26–29.

52. Reid, *Southeast Asia,* 2:181.

53. See Michael G. Peletz's historical overview of local and qadi justice in the Malay peninsula and Sumatra in *Islamic Modern: Religious Courts and Cultural Politics in Malaysia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 26–38.

54. For a dating of pesantrens back to the seventeenth century, see G. W. J. Drewes, *The Admonitions of Seh Bari* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 11. For a critique of Drewes, see Martin van Bruinessen, "*Shari'a* court, *tarekat* and *pesantren:* Religious Institutions in the Banten Sultanate," in *Archipel* (Paris) 50 (1995): 165–200.

55. A detailed history of Islamic education, Azyumardi Azra's study of Islamic schools in West Sumatra (known locally as *surau*) concludes that the first schools were established in the late seventeenth century. However, Azra underscores that it is not clear that these schools provided intermediate or advanced study. The great wave of school construction, he adds, occurred later, in the aftermath of West Sumatra's Wahhabi-influenced *Padri* war (1803–37). See Azyumardi Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Islam Traditional dalam Transisi dan Modernisasi* [Surau: Traditional Islamic Education in Transition and Modernization] (Jakarta: Logos, 2003), p. 9.

56. Van Bruinessen, "*Shari'a* court, *tarekat* and *pesantren,*" p. 174. S. Soebardi's 1971 study argues that the establishment of pesantrens dedicated to the study of classical religious commentaries (*kitabs*) goes back to the sixteenth century. There is little evidence to suggest, however, that *advanced* religious learning was common at this time. See S. Soebardi, "Santri Religious Elements as Reflected in the Serate Tjentini," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 127, no. 3 (1971): 331–49.

57. A recent study by M. C. Ricklefs provides an excellent overview in a nineteenth-century Javanese setting of the tensions created by the spread of institutions of

formal Islamic learning and a Muslim populace with a less *shari'a*-minded understanding of their faith. See his *Polarising Javanese Society: Islamic and Other Visions* (*c. 1830–1930*) (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007), esp. pp. 49–83.

58. For a sympathetic portrait of al-Wahhab's life and thought, see Natana J. Delong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

59. On the Padri movement, see Christine Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism in a Changing Economy: Central Sumatra, 1784–1847* (London and Malmö: Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph No. 49, Curzon Press, 1983), pp. 161–92. On the Patani reformists, see Virginia Matheson and M. B. Hooker, "Jawi Literature in Patani: The Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition," in *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 61, no. 1 (1988): 1–86.

60. In the 1820s, eight hundred pilgrims left for Arabia from Singapore alone. This was a source of consternation for Christian missionaries, who lamented the growing influence of *hajis* among Malays. See Milner, *Invention of Politics,* p. 159.

61. See C. Snouck Hurgonje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1931), p. 215.

62. Van Bruinessen, "Global and Local," p. 49.

63. This is not to say that the prototypes encountered in the Middle East were exclusively Middle Eastern. Martin van Bruinessen has discovered evidence indicating that another influence on Southeast Asian educators in the late nineteenth century was the Indian-established Sawlatiyya madrasa in Mecca. Endowed by an Indian woman and directed by a renowned anticolonial scholar, Rahmat Allah bin Khalil al-'Uthman, the Sawlatiyya was established in 1874 as a reformed madrasa related to the celebrated Darul 'Ulum school in Deoband, India. At the turn of the century, many Indonesians studied at the school. See van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and *Kitab Kuning:* Maintenance and Continuation of a Tradition of Religious Learning," in Wolfgang Marschall, ed., *Texts from the Islands: Oral and Written Traditions of Indonesia and the Malaya World* (Bern: University of Bern Press, 1994), pp. 121–45.

64. See Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu," in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 146, no 6, 2–3 (1989): 225–269, esp. 230; and Madmarn, *Pondok and Madrasah,* pp. 52–54.

65. See Sartono Kartodirdjo, "Agrarian Radicalism in Java: Its Setting and Development," in Claire Holt, ed., *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 71–125; and *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course and Sequel* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).

66. Michael G. Peletz, *Islamic Modern: Religious Courts and Cultural Politics in Malaysia* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 30.

67. For a portrait of one such center, see William R. Roff, "The Malayo-Muslim World of Singapore at the Close of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 1 (1964): 75–90.

68. I owe this phrase to John Bowen; see *Muslims through Discourse,* p. 33.

69. In the 1890s, Ahmad Khatib al-Minankabawi, the grandson of an Hijazi immigrant to West Sumatra, was a leading figure in the Jawi community in Mecca. During his long years of residence, Khatib was a vociferous critic of both colonialism and Minangkabau customary law. Khatib influenced a generation of students who, on their return to Southeast Asia, assumed seats on opposite sides of the New-Group and Old-Group debate. As Michael Laffan has shown, in the 1890s the Meccan Jawi community was not yet polarized along these lines. Compare Michael Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood*

and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma below the Winds (London and New York: Routledge-Curzon, 2003), pp. 106–13, with William R. Roff, "Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920's," *Indonesia* 9 (April 1970): 73–87.

70. The reformist viewpoint on ancestral offerings is summarized in Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse,* p. 31; and Peletz, *Islamic Modern,* p. 54.

71. On the Kaum Muda vs. Kaum Tua controversy in late colonial Malaya, see William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism,* 2nd ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 56–90; on the conflict in Negeri Sembilan, Malaya, see Peletz, *Islamic Modern,* pp. 53–55; and in the Gayo highlands of Sumatra, see Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse,* pp. 11–16, 22–35. For a reassessment of the opposition in Indonesian today, see Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 7–8, 14–16.

72. Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra* (*1927–1933*) (Ithaca, NY: Monograph Series, Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1971), p. 55.

73. See L. W. C. van den Berg, "Het Mohammedaansche godsdienstonderwijs op Java en Madoera en de daarbij gebruikt Arabische Boeken," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land-, En Volkenkunde* 31 (1886): 519–55; and Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning."

74. Van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning," p. 229.

75. On kitab kuning in contemporary Java, see also Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 57–58.

76. On Tebuireng, see Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 25–45; and Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *The Pesantren Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java* (Tempe: Monograph Series, Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1999), pp. 77–115.

77. The exact date for the establishment of a boarding school for young women in Indonesia is a matter of disagreement. In the late 1920s, several schools established classes for females, apparently without yet setting up a freestanding boarding school. At the very latest, then, in 1930 the Pesantren Denanyar in Jombang established a fully separate boarding school for girls. For an overview of this history and of pesantren curricular lessons on proper women's behavior, see Eka Srimulyani, "Muslim Women and Education in Indonesia: The *Pondok Pesantren Experience,*" in *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 27, no. 1 (March 2007): 85–99.

78. On the traditionalists' early enthusiasm for nationalism, see André Feillard, *Islam et armée dans l'Indonésie contemporaine* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995), p. 35.

79. See Muhammad Fuad, "Islam, Modernity, and Muhammadiyah's Educational Program," in *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 5, no. 3 (2004), pp. 400–414.

80. See Dhofier, *Pesantren Tradition,* p. 22.

81. See Roff, *Origins of Malay Nationalism,* pp. 67–70.

82. Ibid., p. 80.

83. For a historical study that resonates with Chapter 3 (Kraince), see Rosnani Hasim, *Educational Dualism in Malaysia: Implications for Theory and Practice* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1996).

84. See Susan Ackerman and Raymond L. M. Lee, *Heaven in Transition: Non-Muslim Religious Innovation and Ethnic Identity in Malaysia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988).

85. See Farish A. Noor's superlative *Islam Embedded: The Historical Development of the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party PAS* (*1951–2003*), vol. 1 (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 2004), pp. 28–96.

86. Peletz, *Islamic Modern,* pp. 124, 188, and Zainah Anwar, "What Islam, Whose Islam? Sisters in Islam and the Struggle for Women's Rights," in Robert W. Hefner, ed., *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), pp. 227–52.

87. On Egypt, see Carrie Wickham Rosefksy, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

88. See Matheson and Hooker, "Jawi Literature"; and Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Patani,* pp. 17–40.

89. On this history, see also Raymond Scupin, "Muslim Accommodation in Thai Society," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 2 (1998): 229–58.

90. For an overview of the escalating violence in the 2000s, see Duncan McCargo, ed., *Rethinking Thailands's Southern Violence* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007).

91. In particular, many pesantrens still use a text written by Imam Nawawi al-Bantani (1818–1897), a famous West Javanese scholar who taught in Mecca's al-Haram mosque in the late nineteenth century, that details the (many) circumstances under which husbands may beat their wives. See Srimulyani, "Muslim Women and Education in Indonesia," p. 94. On Nawawi's place in Indonesian Islamic scholarship, see Abd. Rachman, "Nawawi al-Bantani: An Intellectual Master of the Pesantren Tradition," *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 3, no. 3 (1996): 81–114. For a broader and compelling overview of women's roles in Islamic education and organizations in Indonesia, see Pieternella van Doorn-Harder, *Women Shaping Islam: Reading the Qur'an in Indonesia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

92. On Tablighis in Thailand, see also Alexander Horstmann, "The Inculturation of a Transnational Islamic Missionary Movement: Tablighi Jamaat al-Dawa and Muslim Society in Southern Thailand," *Sojourn* 22, no. 1 (2007): 107–30. For comparative studies of the movement, see Muhammad Khalid Masud, ed., *Travellers in Faith: Studies of the Tablighi Jama'at as a Transnational Islamic Movement for Faith Renewal* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

93. See McCargo, *Rethinking Thailand's Southern Violence*.

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95. See International Crisis Group, "Southern Philippines Backgrounder: Terrorism and the Peace Process," ICG Asia Report No. 80 (Singapore and Brussels: ICG, 13 July 2004).

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98. See McKenna, *Muslim Rulers,* pp. 104–8.

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100. Ibid., p. 415.

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102. For an analysis of the jurisprudential texts used in Southeast Asia, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and *Kitab Kuning:* Maintenance and Continuation of a

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2 ISLAMIC SCHOOLS, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, AND DEMOCRACY IN INDONESIA

ROBERT W. HEFNER

Events in the early 2000s cast a pall over Indonesia's 47,000 Islamic schools. Just a few years earlier, in the late 1980s, the state Islamic university system had initiated curricular reforms that transformed it into one of the most forward-looking in the entire Muslim world.[1] In the 1990s, students and faculty from the same system played a proud role in Indonesia's democracy movement, one of the largest the Muslim world has ever seen.[2] Following the collapse of President Soeharto's "New Order" regime (1966–May 1998), however, radical Islamist paramilitaries (*laskar*) with ties to conservative Islamist boarding schools (*pesantren*) sprang up in cities and towns across the country. In a few places, the militants got into pitched street fights with Christians, democracy activists, and the local police. Several dozen Islamic boarding schools also initiated campaigns to dispatch *mujahidin* fighters from Java and Sumatra to the eastern Indonesian provinces of Maluku and north Maluku, where, from 1999 to 2003, almost ten thousand people died in fierce Christian-Muslim violence.[3]

Concerns about the political disposition of the country's Islamic schools were further heightened with the 2002 bombings of a beachfront pub in south Bali, in which more than two hundred people perished, most of them Western tourists. The youths eventually convicted of the attack were members of the terrorist Jemaah Islamiyah and were discovered to have ties to an Islamic boarding school in Lamongan, East Java. Several of that school's administrators were, in turn, found to be former students of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, the director of the al-Mukmin boarding school in south-central Java, and a man widely regarded as having been the leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). In October 2005, suicide bombers with ties to the JI launched three bomb attacks on tourist sites in south Bali, killing twenty-five people, most of them Indonesians.

Some Western observers saw these incidents as proof that at least some among Indonesia's Islamic schools had become training camps for al-Qa'ida militants intent on opening a "second front" against Western interests.[4] It was not just Western analysts, however, who harbored these concerns. A few days after the second Bali bombing, the Indonesian vice president, Jusuf Kalla, blamed the attack on individuals from an Islamic boarding school, which he declined to identify by name. The vice president emphasized that the government understood that the great majority of Islamic schools have nothing to do with terrorism. Nonetheless, he insisted, it was obliged to carry out heightened surveillance of the few schools inclined toward "irresponsible" behavior. A few days later, Kalla startled Muslim educators further by his announcement that the government planned to fingerprint all boarding school students (*santri*). Kalla's declaration was greeted with a storm of protest as well as a terse disclaimer from the national chief of police, who made it clear that his department had no intention of fingerprinting *santri*.[5]

The chief's opposition to fingerprinting notwithstanding, in the weeks following the second Bali bombing, police blanketed neighborhoods and towns across Indonesia with banners calling for citizens to report any activity that might be linked to terrorism. Those weeks also witnessed a dramatic increase in Muslim scholars' condemnation of terrorist acts, statements interpreted by many observers as part of a campaign to support the government's efforts. The period also saw the publication of books by prominent Muslim scholars emphasizing that

a terrorist network exists in Indonesia and is a threat to Muslims and Muslim schooling. Prior to this time, government officials and Muslim leaders had hesitated to make such statements for fear of sounding as if they were aligning themselves with the United States, whose military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq were widely unpopular.[6]

As my research visits in December 2005, July–August 2006, and December 2006 revealed, these efforts to isolate violent elements in the Muslim community reverberated in even the most isolated Islamic schools. Educators protested that their schools were being wrongly singled out for blame. They reminded the public of the courageous role that Islamic schools had played in Indonesia's independence struggle; the large number of pesantren- and madrasa-educated politicians active in multireligious parties; and the pluralist commitments demonstrated by Muslim students and teachers in the democracy struggles of the 1990s. Notwithstanding these protestations, the violent acts of a few cast a shadow over the Islamic school system, raising questions, not just about schools and politics, but about the place of Islamic education in Indonesian society as a whole.

In this chapter, I want to step back from these events and examine several trends in Indonesia's Islamic schools. The schools with which I am primarily concerned include the country's 11,000 Islamic boarding schools (pesantrens) and its 36,000 modern Islamic day schools (madrasas). The madrasa wing of the network educates some 5.7 million students or 13 percent of Indonesia's primary and secondary school student body. The pesantren wing educates an additional 2.9 million students, most after they have completed primary or middle school. In an earlier publication written with Azyumardi Azra and Dina Afrianty from the Hidaytatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta, I provided an overview of the development of Islamic education in this, the largest Muslim-majority country in the world.[7] That essay also discussed the transformative role played by Islamic higher education in Indonesia's Muslim schools, so here I will touch only in passing on that segment of the Islamic school system. The present chapter aims to go beyond the earlier essay and address the question of how one of the most forward-looking Islamic educational systems in the world has also given rise to a small but militant fringe. More generally, the chapter asks what developments in the Islamic educational system imply for Indonesia's continuing transition from thirty-two years of authoritarian rule.

I begin this chapter, then, with a brief overview of the variety of Islamic schools in Indonesia. This section also addresses the question of how it came to be that, unlike their counterparts in so many Muslim nations, the majority of Islamic schools volunteered to open their curricula to general or "secular" education in addition to religious study. The chapter then turns to examine the recent appearance of a new breed of Islamic schools of a "social-movement" nature. By social-movement schools, I refer to educational institutions that aim, not merely to impart knowledge and values to children, but to use the networks and perceptual frames that religious education provides to challenge the existing organization of state and society. As I explain, with its appeal for a deeper Islamization of self and society, Islamic education in Indonesia has long displayed some of the characteristics that political sociologists identify with social movements. However, it was only in the 1980s and 1990s that a significant number of schools began to interpret this mission in an activist and nationally organized way. A minority among a minority, only a tiny proportion of the movement schools have in turn interpreted their activist mission in a politically *radical* manner. However, the dedication and militancy of these few schools have allowed them to exercise an influence on Muslim politics—if not education—disproportionate to their numbers in Indonesian society.

Meanwhile, as I discuss in the final section of this chapter, the mainstream educational landscape has been swept by a development that dwarfs the activities of the radical fringe. It is the fact that the overwhelming majority of Muslim educators have concluded that constitutional democracy is compatible with Islam, and is the best form of government for Indonesia. This is a great transformation of Islamic educational culture indeed. But the change has proved complicated. Even as they say they subscribe to democratic values, most educators also opine that divine law (*shari'a*) should serve as the basis of the state.

As the concluding section of this chapter explains, the coexistence of democratic and shari'a-minded commitments in Muslim educational circles is not as paradoxical as it first appears, since most educators have an ethically abstract and procedurally gradualist understanding of just how the law should be implemented. Nonetheless, the interplay of democratic and shari'a idealisms continues to raise questions and generate tensions. My conclusion suggests that

the primary question with which mainstream Muslim educators will grapple in years to come is not radicalization, but how to balance the ideals of democracy with the ethical imperatives of God's law.

VARIETIES OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

For the better part of a century, Islamic education in Indonesia has had three primary institutional channels: (1) *pengajian Qur'an,* basic instruction in learning to read and recite but not literally understand the Qur'an; (2) study at a pesantren or pondok, an Islamic boarding school for students aspiring to intermediate or advanced facility in Islamic traditions of knowledge; and (3) enrollment in a madrasa, a (in Indonesia) modern day school that uses graded classes, textbooks, and salaried instructors to provide a mix of religious and general education.

As elsewhere in Southeast Asia, pengajian Qur'an is the oldest and most elementary form of Islamic schooling, and for most students it remains the foundation on which their religious education is built today. Often only lightly institutionalized, Qur'anic study usually takes place, not in a freestanding school building, but in village mosques, prayer houses (*langgar, musholla*), and the private homes of community religious teachers. Classes are usually held in the late afternoon or evening, at a time when young children of six to eleven years of age are not otherwise busy attending a regular school. As this staggered schedule suggests, Qur'anic study is not a substitute for general education but a complement to it. This was not always the case. In the nineteenth century, when only a few children of native aristocrats and employees of Dutch estates were provided with a formal education,[8] pengajian Qur'an was the only schooling available for most native youths. For many of these children, pengajian provided a complementary benefit: it introduced students to the modified Arabic script, known as Jawi, once used across Muslim Southeast Asia.[9] Although Qur'anic recitation did not teach students to understand Arabic, then, it did provide some with an alphabetic facility that, with some additional training, might be applied to other literacy tasks.

Qur'anic recitation does not familarize students with any of the other traditions of Islamic knowledge, such as those associated with the study of the classical commentaries known as *kitab* (see Chapter 1). For youths who wish to go further in their religious studies, then, today

there are three institutional options: enrollment in a pesantren boarding school; attendance at a modern madrasa day school; or residence in a pesantren while simultaneously taking classes at a madrasa.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, there were other, more localized avenues for formal Islamic education, like the West Sumatran institution known as a *surau.*[10] Older Islamic schools like the surau provided basic instruction in Arabic beyond the minimum obtained in pengajian Qur'an. In addition to offering more Arabic, the *surau* also provided students with the opportunity to read and memorize a few classical religious texts. Most kitabs were commentaries (Ind. *syarah;* Ar. *sharh*) in the local dialect and/or Arabic on an Arabic text which was itself a commentary or gloss on some older Arabic text. In the first half of the twentieth century, local Islamic schools like the surau gave way to more modern and standardized institutions modeled on Western and newer Muslim prototypes. The spread of these reformed Muslim schools was part of the great "recentering" of Islamic knowledge and practice that took place across Southeast Asia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Chapter 1).

Today, as in the late nineteenth century, many students interested in advanced Islamic learning choose the first of the above educational options: enrolling in an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren,* Jav., lit. a place of residence for Islamic students or santri; also known as a pondok or pondok pesantren, from *pondok,* Jav. and Malay, "hut, cottage"). A Malayo-Indonesian variation on the classical Middle Eastern madrasa, the pesantren is dedicated to the study and transmission of the Islamic sciences, including knowledge of the Qur'an and hadith, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Arabic grammar, principles of religion (*usul ad-din*), the sources of the law (*usul al-fiqh*), didactic theology (*kalam*), and mysticism (*tasawwuf*). Today the majority of santri students devote just a few years to their religious study, usually after first completing elementary or middle school. This relatively brief period of study is sufficient to provide a student with the skills required to serve as a mosque leader (*imam,* a role reserved for males) or village religious teacher (*ustadz,* open to both sexes). This short a period of study, however, is not sufficient to qualify one as a religious scholar (*'alim;* pl. *'ulama*).

Youths aspiring to the latter status typically have to devote six, eight, or even more years to religious study. As with madrasas in the medieval Middle East, it was once common for advanced students to

wander from one teacher to another, staying long enough in one place to master a kitab under the guidance of a scholar renowned for his expertise in that text. When a teacher deemed a student proficient in the text, he made a ritualized statement or, less commonly, provided a certificate known as the *ijaza*. As in the classical Middle East, the ijaza is not so much a degree as a sign that the master has authorized the student to teach the text to others.[11]

Today some traditional pesantrens still provide instruction in this loosely structured manner, and in this sense the tradition of the peripatetic religious student is not entirely dead. In the early twentieth century, however, many pesantrens introduced graded classes and formal certification into parts of their curriculum. This formalization dealt a blow to the tradition of the wandering student. Afterward most students were required to take several courses simultaneously, and were also obliged to spend long periods of time at one school rather than enjoy serial residence at several.[12]

With the expansion of travel to the Middle East in the final decades of the nineteenth century (see Chapter 1), Indonesia's Muslims were also exposed to an educational institution that came to serve as the largest leg of Islamic schooling in today's Indonesia, the madrasa. Contrary to its usage in the classical Middle East, in Indonesia the term "madrasa" refers, not to an institution of advanced religious learning, but to a primary or secondary Islamic school that combines graded instruction in general ("secular") subjects with religious instruction.[13] Beginning in the 1910s and the 1920s, Islamic reformers in West Sumatra and south-central Java, commonly known as the "New Group" (Kaum Muda), began to build madrasas as an alternative to the pesantren-style education offered by "Old Group" (Kaum Tua) traditionalists.[14] Not all among the Old Group traditionalists opposed the new educational form. In the late nineteenth century, many traditionalist scholars from Java had been introduced to madrasa education while studying in Mecca. After returning to Java, some introduced elements of madrasa pedagogy into their pesantrens, including graded classes and the simultaneous study of several subjects rather than the sequential study of individual kitabs.

The quiet absorption of madrasa instructional methods into the pesantren curriculum was but one of the reforms that were to reshape Indonesia's traditionalist schools. Although criticized by New Group

scholars as backward-looking and unchanging, over the course of the century the traditionalists reevaluated and reformed their schools, thereby securing the schools' central position in Islamic learning.

REPRODUCTION THROUGH EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

As the chapters in this volume make clear, the Indonesian pesantren has been more successful at maintaining its central place in Islamic education than have its counterparts in the Malay peninsula, southern Thailand, and Cambodia. Muslims in these other regions had boarding schools (pondoks) similar in organization and ambition to Indonesian pesantrens. The primary object of study in these boarding schools was also the "yellow texts" (*kitab kuning*) studied in the Indonesian pesantren. Over the course of the twentieth century, however, Malaysia and Cambodia's pondoks lost ground to more modernized Islamic schools, most of which combined features of Western schooling with elements of the Middle Eastern madrasa. The pondok tradition in Thailand has been spared a comparable decline only because it became a symbol of the Malay minority's identity vis-à-vis the encroaching Thai state.[15]

The key to the Indonesian pesantren's dynamism has been its directors' willingness to borrow from other school systems while maintaining a commitment to the study of classical religious texts. The first of the pesantren's reforms was the above-mentioned introduction of madrasa-style classrooms and grading into the pesantren, a change that began in a few institutions in Java during the 1910s and 1920s. Over the next half-century, two other reforms transformed the pesantren: the opening of advanced study to women; and the incorporation of general or "secular" content into the school complex's curriculum.

Educating Women

Until the 1910s, girls participated in pengajian Qur'an and other elementary forms of religious study, but they were barred from the pesantrens where students were provided with intermediate and advanced study in the Islamic sciences.[16] Religious scholarship was regarded as a male profession. The occasional exception to the higher-educational-rule concerned young women from the families of Islamic dignitaries, some of whom were provided with advanced Arabic and allowed to study classical religious texts. However, these exceptions to the gender

rule were taught their lessons, not in formal schools, but in the privacy of their homes or with a close relative in a nearby mosque.

In the 1910s, the ban on women from intermediate and advanced Islamic education began to be lifted, as madrasas were established in West Sumatra and Java that offered religious education for young women. Several pesantrens followed suit in the late 1920s and 1930s. Although at first they continued to lag behind those of boys, girls' enrollments grew steadily in the late colonial and early independence period. By the 1990s, some 5.7 million or 13 percent of Indonesia's 44 million primary and secondary students were enrolled in madrasas, and at the primary and junior high school levels male and female enrollments were almost equal. At the senior secondary level, girls even outnumbered boys 55 to 45 percent.[17]

A broadly balanced pattern also obtained in the pesantren wing of the Islamic school system. In 2002, there were 2.97 million pesantren students, most of whom, again, had received some manner of primary education prior to enrolling in their pesantren program. Of the total, 52.7 percent were male; 47.3 percent female. Notwithstanding the bold efforts of certain NU-based reformists, the texts most widely used in pesantrens for teaching young men and women about marital relations are still marked by stark masculinist biases.[18] At the very least, however, in terms of enrollments, Islamic education in Indonesia has opened its doors wide to young women.

Accommodating the Secular

The second major reform in Islamic education, the incorporation of general or "secular" educational materials into the curriculum, took place in a similarly gradualist manner. Young Groups schools in West Sumatra and south-central Java led the way in the change, introducing mathematics, history, English, and science into the curriculum in the 1910s. In the 1920s, the innovation spread to several pesantrens, with the renowned Tebuireng pesantren in Jombang and Gontor school in Ponorogo, East Java, leading the way.[19]

Although the incorporation of classes, tests, and a "secular" curriculum into Islamic schooling showed the clear imprint of Middle Eastern educational reforms, the effort was also influenced by Dutch policies during the last half-century of colonial rule, which ended with the Japanese invasion in early 1942. When the Dutch introduced

programs for native education at the end of the nineteenth century, they made no secret of their desire to use secular schooling to diminish the influence of Islamic schools and to create a Western-oriented elite.[20] In several parts of the East Indies, the Dutch succeeded in wooing native officials away from Islam, an achievement that only further strained relations between regional aristocrats and the Muslim elite. In a few regions, tensions like these erupted into anti-aristocrat violence during Indonesia's war for independence (1945–1949).[21] Rather than just becoming pliant compradors, however, in the 1920s many graduates of Dutch schools joined the country's fledgling nationalist movement, which was multireligious and multiethnic in spirit.

Faced with Dutch efforts to marginalize their schools, Muslim educators responded by introducing general subject matter into them. Social histories that I collected in 2005 and 2006 on Islamic school development in West Sumatra, Central and East Java, and South Sulawesi underscored that the accommodation went relatively smoothly in New-Group madrasas, like those of the Sumatra Thawalib in West Sumatra and the Muhammadiyah organization in south-central Java.[22] However, the reform proved far more difficult in traditionalist pesantrens, for the simple reason that most pesantrens lacked teachers capable of providing quality instruction in subjects like mathematics, history, and English.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the fast-changing national scene continued to press pesantrens to accommodate general educational subjects in their curriculum. In the 1950s, the newly independent government of Indonesia launched an ambitious program of teacher training and mass education. The broad appeal of this schooling was reinforced by the fact that a grade-school degree quickly became the minimum requirement for government and some private employment. The rush to study in the new state schools caused enrollments in Muslim schools to plummet, particularly at smaller pesantrens. In the 1950s, many small boarding schools closed. Although enrollments at larger institutions held steady,[23] the pesantren share of the overall student population fell sharply.

The consequence of this heightened competition for Muslim students was that in the 1950s and 1960s more and more pesantren directors resolved to introduce general education into their school programs. Rather than incorporating the new subject matter directly

into the pesantren curriculum, however, most directors opted to build madrasas on the pesantren complex grounds. This allowed their students to study general subjects at the madrasa during the middle of the school day, leaving the early morning, late afternoon, and evening for the study of Arabic and kitabs. At some institutions, young men and women from the surrounding community attended these pesantren-based madrasas as well, a pattern still widespread today.

Ending Educational Dualism

In 1975, the trend toward greater pesantren involvement in general education was given institutional impetus with the signing of a ministerial memorandum stipulating that all students in Muslim schools should receive a general elementary education of at least six years in addition to their religious studies.[24] Known as the "Three Ministers' Joint Agreement" (SKB Tiga Menteri), the memorandum's central aim was to bring Islamic education up to the same standard as that of nonreligious state schools. The government provided incentives in support of the memorandum's recommendations. It offered modest funding to participating schools, and, far more significant, promised that students who fulfilled general-education requirements could sit for college entrance examinations. The hope was that these measures would end once and for all the educational dualism that had long excluded the graduates of Muslim schools from non-Islamic institutions of higher learning.

To qualify for this degree equivalence, however, participating madrasas had to meet certain conditions. Most important, they were obliged to revise their curriculum so that 70 percent of the school week was devoted to general learning while 30 percent was religious. No less significant, to insure that instruction in general topics was of the same quality as that provided in state schools, Muslim schools were expected to use textbooks published by the Ministry of Education and Culture and/or the Ministry of Religion.[25] Over time, the 70–30 figure proved to be a curricular floor rather than an inflexible standard. Schools that wished to devote a larger number of contact hours to religious study were allowed to do so, but only by adding class hours to the school day. In the years since the memorandum, many of the better madrasas, and almost all madrasas housed in pesantrens, have chosen this latter option. As a result, their students put in longer hours than the average student in state schools, so as to devote as

much as 50 percent of their school day to religious study even while fulfilling the state's general educational requirements.

The implementation of the 1975 memorandum's recommendations had three powerful effects on Islamic education as a whole. First, it strengthened the already existing trend of large pesantrens opening madrasas for general education on their school grounds.[26] Second, the new policy also encouraged madrasas to align their curriculum with that of the state's schools, so as to increase the chances that madrasa students might succeed in the all-important college entrance examinations. Third, the policy encouraged the most prestigious Islamic boarding schools, like the Darul Ulum and Tebuireng Pesantrens in Jombang, East Java, to add senior high schools and college faculties to their educational complexes, so as to provide students with training that would provide them with greater employment opportunities.[27] This last trend accelerated in the late Soeharto period, with many large pesantrens establishing colleges and offering degrees in fields like business, law (Islamic and conventional), psychology, and education.

In interviews conducted in 2005 and 2006, Muslim school directors recalled that they welcomed the 1975 agreement because it spoke to one of their most cherished ambitions: that graduates of Islamic schools should have equal rights of access to state colleges and universities. The educators acknowledged, however, that the reforms had altered their schools' mission. For those who embraced the reforms, the mission was no longer to train scholars for a life of learning in the advanced Islamic sciences, but to instill piety in students heading out into the general labor market. Most teachers recognized the overall benefits of the mission change. As a teacher in Jombang put it in December 2006: "The new policy was good, because it provided Muslims with access to new jobs, and it brought pious Muslims into businesses and professions where they have long been absent. Islam is not supposed to be just something for experts and scholars."

THE SALAF REVIVAL

Not all Islamic pesantrens went along with the 1975 memorandum's recommended reforms. Some schools, like the celebrated modernist pesantren at Gontor, insisted on keeping to their own curriculum, which in Gontor's case mixes the study of classical and modern religious texts with general education and intensive study of Arabic and English. School

officials at Gontor and like-minded schools were keenly aware, however, of their graduates' interest in access to higher education. Behind the scenes and in good Indonesian fashion, then, the officials made private arrangements with state Islamic colleges whereby graduates from their institutions were allowed to sit for entrance examinations.[28]

Other, more traditionalist pesantrens opted to ignore the terms of the memorandum entirely, because the directors at these institutions were not interested in incorporating any general subject matter into their curricula. As with the famous Pesantren Lirboyo in Kediri, Java, these schools declared that they wished to remain true to their founding mission, which was to provide advanced training in Arabic and the classical kitab kuning. At most of these institutions, school officials made clear that they were not on principle opposed to the Three Ministers' Agreement, but simply believed that there was still a need for pesantrens dedicated to full-time training in Arabic and the Islamic sciences.

The Three Ministers' Agreement had never intended to abolish religion-only pesantrens like Lirboyo, or independent madrasas with a higher proportion of religion than secular classes. The memorandum stipulated that a small number of senior secondary madrasas, as well as any pesantren that so desired, could continue to dedicate the bulk of their curriculum to religious studies. Government officials nonetheless hoped to reduce the number of madrasas with more than 50 percent religious instruction by requiring that institutions apply for this status as "special" schools (*madrasa khusus*). In a manner typical of ministry dealings with Muslim educators in the 1970s,[29] the enforcement provisions for this policy were light-handed; the only sanction against schools declining to register was that they would not qualify for the small subsidy offered to participating madrasas.

The government's interactions with pesantrens were similarly light-handed. In the mid-1970s, there were still a good number of pesantrens like Lirboyo that provided no instruction in nonreligious subjects. Known as *pesantren salaf* (religion-only boarding schools, as opposed to *pesantren khalaf,* or mixed-curriculum pesantrens),[30] these schools attracted students from traditionalist backgrounds who hoped to pursue private, nongovernmental careers in such religious fields as preaching, teaching, or jurisprudence. Officials from the two ministries responsible for coordinating state educational programs, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religion, recognized that,

in training advanced scholars in the Islamic sciences, pesantren salaf provide an important service to the Muslim community. The ministries thus resolved not to interfere in pesantren salaf affairs, allowing the educational market to decide these schools' fate.

As my interviews with Ministry of Religion officials in December 2005 indicated, however, in the late-1970s government officials were also convinced that, left to themselves, pesantren salaf would decline in popularity to the point where, like Christian seminaries in the West, eventually only the few dozens required to train advanced scholars would remain. Western scholars assessing pesantrens in these years shared this modernizing confidence, believing that pesantren enrollments were likely to plummet as students opted for schools with a greater mix of general and vocational instruction.[31] Government statistics from these years at first seemed to confirm that young people were choosing general schools over Islamic institutions and that, when they opted for an Islamic school, they picked mixed-curricula madrasas over religion-only pesantrens.

Ministry officials also felt that employment realities would hasten the decline of religion-only pesantrens. Students hoping to work in the government's religious bureaucracy or to teach Islam in state or private schools (where all Muslim students are required to receive two hours of religious instruction each week) recognized that the surest path into such employment was through one of Indonesia's State Islamic Colleges (IAIN), Higher Schools for Islamic Studies (STAIN), or private Islamic universities that met state standards.[32] The expansion of state and private Islamic colleges offering general educational degrees was one of the most significant changes in Indonesian higher education during the 1980s and 1990s.[33]

Muslim educators with whom I spoke in 2005 and 2006 commented that enrollments in pesantren salaf did decline in the late 1970s and early 1980s, just as government officials had predicted. However, to the surprise of many officials, the trend was reversed in the late 1980s and 1990s, as Indonesia was swept by an Islamic resurgence of historically unprecedented proportions.[34] By the mid-1990s, large pesantrens that had earlier accommodated general education, like the Pesantren Tebuireng in Jombang, reopened special programs for students who wished to pursue religion-only programs of study.[35] Although precise statistics are lacking, Islamic teachers in East Java

today report that dozens of small pesantren *salaf* have been founded since the 1990s, creating a small salaf revival.

This growing interest in salaf education is not a sign of antimodern conservatism, nor, least of all, a surging radicalism. Studies of salaf schools and my own visits over the years confirm the remarks of Jakartan-based educators: that, in matters of pedagogical technique, the larger pesantren salaf tend to be only slightly more conservative than their *khalaf* counterparts; indeed, many make ready use of computers, video CDs (for language study), and even the Internet.[36] Students who enter salaf programs typically come from mainstream traditionalist households. Like their counterparts at the pesantren khalaf, most are somewhat more conservative than the Muslim public on matters of gender and Islamic law, but they do not otherwise conform to any single political mold.

Rather than reflecting a "fundamentalist" turn in Islamic education, then, the revival of salaf education reflects two cultural developments specific to the religious marketplace. The first is the growth in piety among the Muslim public as a whole. Among its myriad social effects, the resurgence has given rise to a marked expansion of interest in classical Muslim scholarship and Islamic traditions of knowledge. One ancillary expression of this interest is seen in Indonesia's booming market in Islamic publishing, one segment of which has made classical works of Islamic scholarship broadly available in Indonesian translation.[37] The second and equally important influence on the small salaf revival has been the availability of new employment opportunities for classically trained scholars, especially those with a gift for preaching. Vice Rector Mansur Zawawi of the Hasyim Asy'ari Islamic Institute in Jombang, East Java summarized the latter matter clearly: "Contrary to what we saw fifteen years ago, today there are abundant opportunities for *salaf* graduates to go into private enterprise, working as preachers. A gifted preacher fluent in Arabic and knowledgeable in religion can earn more in one night than an Islamic judge or teacher gets in a month!"[38]

The growing interest in Islamic education during the 1980s and 1990s was reflected in educational statistics. Between 1977 and 1997, the number of pesantrens more than doubled, rising from 4,195 to 9,388. Over the same period, the number of santri students increased from 677,000 to 1,770,760; by 2002, the figure had grown to just under three million.[39] A similar expansionist trend has been seen in

madrasas, where, as noted above, some 5.698 million primary and secondary school age students are educated.[40] All this is to say that, contrary to earlier forecasts, Islamic education in late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century Indonesia has not collapsed in the face of a secularist juggernaut, but boomed.

SCHOOLING AS SOCIAL MOVEMENT

As this history illustrates, Indonesia's Islamic schools have shown a remarkable aptitude for competing in a fast-changing educational marketplace. Although some schools remain aloof, the main currents in Islamic education have adapted to the desires of parents and students by adding general and vocational programs to their curricula. Although market forces explain some of the Islamic sector's dynamism, it is clear that the religious-educational marketplace is embedded in a larger world subject to forces more varied than price signals among autonomous individuals.[41] Indeed, and to digress for a moment into a topic debated by economic theorists, one of the most striking features of religious education is that, rather than just satisfying preexisting "consumer preferences," religious schools help to produce the very demand to which they respond. Moreover, the goal of Islamic education is not merely individual. Among the pious, education is seen as part of a collective duty to Islamize society, turning believers away from things un-Islamic and toward those commanded by God.

Viewed from this larger perspective, Indonesia's Islamic schools bear an at least partial resemblance to the social movements to which political theorists have turned their attention in recent years. In Sidney Tarrow's oft-cited phrase, social movements are "collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities," and seeking a fundamental change in existing institutions and hierarchies.[42] Much social movement literature implies that the state is the primary target of movement-leveraged change. However, there is no reason to assume that all social movements are state-centric in orientation. As with movements in other religious traditions, Islamic social movements tend to be as much concerned with changing citizens and society as they are with challenging the state.[43]

The parallel between social movements and Islamic schooling is even more striking when one looks at the way in which religious

schools create social organizations and cultural frames for perceiving and reforming the social order. Here again a brief theoretical aside is in order. Social movement theory arose in reaction to "strain" and "grievance" explanations of protest movements in political sociology; these were regarded as flawed in two ways. First, strain theories assumed that the mere presence of injustices or tensions in society is sufficient to generate protest movements.[44] And second, in emphasizing a unitary social psychology, strain theorists seemed to imply that the actors who join social movements are more stressed out than rational, seeking compensatory release rather then an effective instrument for mobilization and change.

Social movement theorists responded to strain theory's presuppositions by pointing out that injustice and grievances abound in all societies, but they do not everywhere give rise to organized social protest. The creation of the latter depends on social processes far less automatic than strain theories imply. In particular, theorists argued, the emergence of social movements depends on three conditions: the existence of social networks through which actors can communicate and mobilize; opportunity structures in political society that provide openings through which the mobilization can move without incurring repression; and, last but not least, leaders capable of formulating "cultural frames" that resonate with popular grievances, inspiring people to join the social movement.

Of course, the analogy between social movements and Islamic schools begins to wear thin once one recalls that, historically, most schools were founded for reasons that had little to do with creating a unified movement. In Indonesia as in many other parts of the Muslim world, traditionalist educators are notorious for the way in which they jealously guard their institutional autonomy. This is not an attitude that lends itself to the cohesive leadership highlighted in social movement theory. By comparison with social movements, too, the ends to which Islamic education are put are highly varied. To state the point in more theoretical terms, education's impact on the habits and ideals of its charges is typically behaviorally diffuse rather than instrumentalized toward the efficient achievement of a specific valued end.

Notwithstanding these differences, it is indisputable that Islamic schooling creates network resources ("social capital") with an at least latent potential to draw social actors into organizations and projects that extend well beyond the school yard. It is well known, for example,

that pesantren education creates a bond between student and teacher that tends to be infused with a deep sense of gratitude and obedience. The bond in turn gives rise to enduring social solidarities that can be deployed for ends other than those of education or piety.[45] Whether in the ulama-led peasant rebellion in late-nineteenth-century Banten or the phoenix-like resilience of the Nahdlatul Ulama in the twentieth century, modern Indonesian history offers endless examples of Muslim educational networks being put to broader social uses. Indeed, more generally, the twentieth-century political competition associated with what are known in Indonesian studies as *aliran politik* (political currents) was in part the result of what one might describe as the "social movementization" of preexisting educational networks, both Muslim and secular nationalist.[46]

The most striking parallel between Islamic schooling and social movements, however, has to do with the "framing processes" in which both engage.[47] To create an effective movement, social movement theorists emphasize, the cultural frames created by leaders must (1) diagnose some chronic problem in society in a manner that resonates with the needs of people; (2) recommend a strategy for the problem's remedy; and then (3) provide a rationale that motivates actors to support the proposed course of remedial action. If any among these conditions is unmet, the movement will not gain traction.

The most critical element in the framing process is the frame's ability to resonate with the perceptions and aspirations of broad masses of people in society. As Quintan Wiktorowicz has noted, "Such reverberation . . . depends upon not only its consistency with cultural narratives, but also the reputation of the individual or group responsible for articulating the frame, the personal salience of the frame for potential participants, the consistency of the frame, and the frame's empirical credibility in real life."[48]

Some proponents of Islamic schooling in Indonesia have long engaged in campaigns that bear an uncanny resemblance to the framing processes highlighted in social movement theory. For example, in Muslim educational circles in twentieth-century Indonesia, an oft-heard line was that the main cause of the country's problems was the failure of ordinary Muslims to fulfill their religious obligations. The key to improving state and society, then, lay in Muslims learning to observe their religious duties more faithfully.

On the question of the state, the message Muslim educators in Indonesia have conveyed has, to say the least, varied. With the partial exception of the tumultuous period from 1955 to 1965, when the country was torn by a bitter rivalry among communist, nationalist, and Islamic parties, the majority of educators has tended to downplay the need to transform the state or engage in any other radical social project. Indeed, the educational mainstream has long shown a stronger interest in general moral appeals than it has in debates over the proper form of the state. To put the matter differently, inasmuch as they have been concerned with political issues at all, Indonesia's Muslim educators have tended to be nationalist and system-reforming rather than radical Islamist and system-upending. Most align themselves with the Islamic-but-pluralist nationalism of mainstream groups like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama.

Since the early 1990s, however, a few school movements have arisen and offered frames demanding a more far-reaching transformation of politics and society. It is important to emphasize that, even among these schools, only a tiny number follow the example of figures like Abu Bakar Ba'asyir of the al-Mukmin pesantren outside of Solo, Central Java, who advocates what amounts to a revolutionary restructuring of state and society. Islamist revolution is not the preferred end of most of the new generation of social movement schools. The majority steers clear of political radicalism, subscribing to the notion that what is most needed is a gradualist and peaceful Islamization of society and the state.

The most notable example of moderate social movement schools of this latter sort are those associated with what has come to be known in recent years as the "integrated Islamic school" (*sekolah Islam terpadu*) movement. Integrated schools are part of a multistranded educational movement that, to the surprise of many, became one of the fastest-growing trends in Islamic education in the post-Soeharto era.

The PKS and the Integrated Islam School Movement

The first principle of integrated Islamic education is that, rather than confining religious instruction to one or two subject modules, it should be woven into all subjects across the entire school day. Although not all proponents of integrated Islamic schools are familiar with the broader history, the more intellectually sophisticated understand that the

movement is related to efforts by the U.S.-based (but now deceased) Palestinian academic, Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi. In the 1970s and 1980s, al-Faruqi and his colleagues formulated a blistering critique of Western science and education, accusing both of materialist and secularist biases. Al-Faruqi insisted that, if Muslims are to use these disciplines at all, their content must be "Islamized" through their reconstruction around the ideal of the essential unity of God (*tawhid*).[49]

In today's Indonesia, the curricular implementation of the integrated education ideal usually proves to be somewhat less ambitious than one might at first expect. The majority of integrated Islam schools cater to the Muslim middle class and lower-middle class, and they base most of their curriculum on modules prepared by the state Ministries of Education and Religion. They do so, not because of direct government pressures, but because many of their students hope to go on to college, and college admission requires tested mastery of the national curriculum. The integration of religious themes into the general curriculum nonetheless does make a difference in both the style of teaching and the school atmosphere. As one educator at an integrated-Islam school in Tangerang, West Java observed, "Even when we teach a course like mathematics, we try to refer to examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad, who was a trader, and whose trading activities can be used to illustrate mathematical concepts."[50]

Since the fall of the Soeharto regime, hundreds of integrated Islamic schools have sprung up, most of them in urban and suburban areas. The two fastest-growing networks are those associated with two groups of a moderate Islamist persuasion, the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) and the Hidayatullah movement. The PKS network is the larger of the two.

The PKS is a center-right party similar in organization and ambition to Turkey's Welfare Party and its successor, the AK (Justice) party. Founded three months after Soeharto's resignation in May 1998, the PKS won 1.3 percent of the vote in the 1999 elections and an impressive 7.3 percent five years later.[51] Most of the PKS leadership had a background in the Islamist student movement of the 1980s and 1990s, and was influenced by a moderately conservative wing of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. In the 1980s, Indonesian students returning from Egypt had brought back Brotherhood ideas on movement tactics and organization. One of the main ideas they borrowed was that character

formation and religious education (*tarbiyah*) are the best ways to build a movement for social change. The students also learned that the most effective way to carry out this character shaping is through the formation of intimate learning circles (*halaqah*) and support groups (*usrah,* lit. "family") where cadres try to implement God's law in all aspects of their life.

Brotherhood-inspired support groups of this sort typically consist of eight to sixteen same-sex individuals, under the guidance of a centrally appointed leader (*naqib*). The naqib in turn receives guidance from a higher-ranking individual in the organization, with whom he alone has contact. Once established, these support groups are supposed to serve as the nucleus for communities (*jemaah*) of pious Muslims. Their behavior is supposed to be so ethically exemplary that it gradually brings about the transformation of society and—through nonviolent means and at some unspecified future date—the state.

The first tarbiyah cells sprouted on Indonesian campuses in the early 1980s. By the mid-1980s, tarbiyah Islamists had begun to win control of state-sanctioned religious training programs on those same campuses. By the early 1990s, tarbiyah activists had pushed aside more nationalist-minded Islamic groups, like the Association of Indonesian Muslim Students (Himpunan Muslim Indonesia), and captured student senates at many of Indonesia's state universities. Ironically, the activists made less headway on the campuses of state Islamic colleges, which were dominated by Muslims of a pluralist nationalist and social-democratic persuasion.

In March 1998, at the height of student protests against President Soeharto, tarbiyah representatives from sixty colleges came together to form the Indonesian Muslim Student Action Committee or KAMMI (Komite Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia).[52] Although a latecomer to the anti-Soeharto campaign, KAMMI went on to play a central role in the final drive against him. The sight of thousands of chanting Muslim youth, well-dressed and polite, with the young women walking separately amid a sea of long veils, captured the public's imagination and earned the young protestors great respect.[53]

Three months after Soeharto's resignation in May 1998, the KAMMI leadership came together with several like-minded groupings to establish a new party, which they named the Justice Party (Partai Keadilan; PK). Like the student group from which most of

its leadership had originated, the party's central aim was to promote Indonesia's peaceful Islamization. The PK leadership made it clear that it sought to achieve this end through democratic means, which the leaders argued were compatible with Islam. However, because the leaders themselves could not agree, they left unresolved a number of thorny issues relating to the place of women, non-Muslims, and the shari'a in a future Muslim-but-democratic Indonesia. In the years since its founding, the political campaigns conducted by the PK and its successor, the PKS, have been among Indonesia's most well-mannered.[54]

The party had less than a year to prepare for the first national legislative elections in 1999, and it won just 1.3 percent of the vote. In the aftermath of that first election, party officials chose to relax their heretofore strict cadre-training requirements for membership. Between 1999 and 2004, party membership more than quadrupled, allowing the party (now rechristened the Prosperous Justice Party, or PKS) to establish new branches and more than quadruple its share of the vote in the 2004 elections. During campaigning that year, the party again downplayed the question of implementing shari'a, instead emphasizing its commitment to combating corruption and providing public services. In my interviews in Yogyakarta and Jakarta during these years, party officials took pains to point out that their soft-peddling of shari'a was not just a strategic ploy. Rather, the tactic reflected party leaders' conviction that the implementation of Islamic law was a long-term goal which could only be realized when the Muslim public had a deeper understanding of the law.[55] In all these regards, the PKS approach differed from the top-down and immediatist tack favored by militant Islamists in the Crescent and Stars Party (PBB) and the Indonesian Council of Mujahidin (MMI).[56]

It is this moderate Islamist organization, then, from which the largest current in the integrated school movement emerged in the early 2000s. Each of the schools in this network is locally financed and formally independent from the national PKS leadership. However, directors at most schools are happy to acknowledge that they are informally tied to the PKS. Schools vary, however, in the degree to which they encourage or require their staff to affiliate with the PKS. The directorship of the six schools that I visited in 2005 and 2006 did not advertise their ties to the PKS, but parents and older students were well aware of the high regard in which faculty held the party.

Interviewed in 2005 and 2006, several parents of students at integrated-Islam schools in Yogyakarta and Jakarta, who were not themselves members of the PKS, expressed reservations about the way their children were taught to think about non-Muslims. In particular, several were uncomfortable with what they described as the tendency of some PKS teachers to speak about Muslims and Islam in "exclusive" terms. One Yogyakarta father, who had been active in the Muslim-pluralist wing of the democracy movement in the 1990s, observed: "On one hand, the teachers instill a stronger spirit of democracy than do the state's public schools, because the children are taught to speak up and participate in class, not sit passively. But you know I worry about the way in which the children are so regularly reminded that non-Muslims are different, they're doomed to go to hell, and they shouldn't be in positions of authority over Muslims. I don't know whether that's good for democracy."[57]

Although the first principle of integrated Islamic education has to do with the curriculum, most proponents of integrated schools see the "mixing" to which they are dedicated as implying commitment to a second and more ambitious principle, touching on the relationship of Muslim schools to society. In particular, schools are supposed to serve, not only as places for training young students, but as motors for the Islamization of society. A second-grade teacher at an integrated-Islam school in Tangerang, West Java, described the mission in the following terms:

> Our understanding of *terpadu* is also seen in the way we encourage parents to become active in the school and teachers to become active in the community. You know in most public schools in Indonesia parental involvement in education stops at the entrance to the school. We don't agree with that. Many of our teachers are parents, and part of our mission is to allow them to become active in the community, particularly with regard to religious affairs. On the other hand, we also try to bring parents into the school, so they can learn what we do and hopefully become more observant Muslims. We also try to be "mixed" (*terpadu*) by getting better-off people in the community to provide scholarships for poorer students. You see in all this that our mission is not just to educate children.

> We also hope to bring poor people closer to the better off, and the school closer to the community. Our goal is not just education in the narrow sense but *da'wa* [religious "appeal" or predication]. And the main purpose of *da'wa* is to make the entire society more Islamic.

Not all PKS-linked schools interpret this mission in equally activist terms. At another school in West Java, the teachers with whom I spoke remarked that they felt it imprudent to mix politics and education too directly. The school director explained that most students at the school came from families with backgrounds in the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama: "Talking about politics with these parents might only cause bad feelings." He then added: "We're happy with the PKS social project of *da'wa,* but we don't want to get too directly involved with national politics. Parents here would protest if we were political in this way. It's better just to be professional, and let people make their own choices about party politics."[58]

Other teachers and administrators interviewed in 2005 and 2006, however, made it clear that they had no such qualms about using schools to engage the broader community. As one teacher in Yogyakarta explained to me in December 2006: "The PKS is a party of *da'wa,* and the purpose of *da'wa* is not just to make Muslims more individually pious, but to build a better society and, at some point, a better state. Our religion commands us to do this, and as long as we pursue these goals in a democratic way, I don't think anyone has any right to object to what we do."

Hidayatullah's Populist Integralism

Headquartered in Jakarta and Gunung Tembak, a small village south of Balikpapan, East Kalimantan, the Hidayatullah school network was also founded on the principle that while teaching children Islamic schools should also contribute to the transformation of society. As of 2007, the movement operated 133 schools in cities and towns across Indonesia. Demonstrating that the parallels between Islamic school networks and social movements are not an artifact of analysts' imaginations, in 2000 the Hidayatullah organization officially transformed itself from an educational foundation into a political movement. Today it has some two hundred chapters. The movement's central premise

is that "the backwardness of the Muslim world has been caused by a tendency to understand the holism [*keholistikan*] of Islamic teaching in an only partial manner."[59]

The Hidayatullah began in 1973 with the establishment of a small pesantren in what was at the time a forested corner of East Kalimantan. The pesantren's five founders included individuals from traditionalist and modernist backgrounds. However, from the beginning the movement was largely modernist in spirit, with a strong emphasis on the Qur'an and Sunna, and notably less on the study of classical religious commentaries. (However, unlike in some modernist institutions, traditionalist ritual practices like the recitation of God's names, *dzikr,* are allowed). In his youth, Abdullah Said, chief among the school's founders, had been active in the Association of Indonesian Muslim Students (PII), a modernist student organization; he had also attended modernist boarding schools in Gontor and Bangil.[60] While living in West Java, Said is said to have developed ties to the accommodated wing of the Darul Islam. He is also said to been inspired by the life and ideals of Kahar Muzakkar, leader of the Darul Islam rebels in South Sulawesi in the 1950s and early 1960s.[61]

But Said was no political radical. In the 1960s, he had also been active in the Indonesian Student Action Union, known by the acronym KAMI (not to be confused with the KAMMI), which had assisted General Soeharto in his campaign to topple President Soekarno and undermine the Communist Party. After moving to East Kalimantan, Said and his colleagues took care *not* to be seen as Islamist opponents of the New Order government. They maintained excellent relations with local representatives of the nationally dominant Golkar Party. In 1976, the school was officially inaugurated by the then minister of religion, Mukti Ali. In 1984, President Soeharto awarded the Hidayatullah a medal for the school's contribution to East Kalimantan development.

The central ambition of the Hidayatullah pesantren was to use schooling to build a broader community in which Islamic values could be implemented in a comprehensive (*kaffah*) manner. This was to be done, not merely through an integrated school curriculum, but by creating "an integrated form of society." Far more than their PKS counterparts, Hidayatullah staffers interpret this principle of social integration in egalitarian and ascetic terms. Students and staff

at Hidayatullah boarding schools are supposed to be "willing to let go of all the social attributes that they bring from outside and take on a status that is the same as all others."[62] At Gunung Tembak, students and staff live around the central school campus in homes that are neat but, by any standard, spartan. Staff and students are also enjoined to avoid ostentatious clothing and luxury goods, as well as Western and hedonistic entertainments.

From the first, staffers at Gunung Tembak not only taught but ran businesses in forestry, animal husbandry, construction, and transportation. Already in the 1970s, some of these enterprises had proved so successful that the school directors began to dream of establishing branches of their school in other parts of Indonesia.

In 1978, Hidayatullah leaders dispatched their first team of graduates to Java and Sulawesi to explore the possibility of opening branch schools and businesses. The graduates' first duty was to engage in predication (*da'wa*), in the hope of recruiting a small group of supporters. If its numbers grew, the branch was supposed to erect a boarding school. Staff and students at the school were also supposed to move quickly to establish businesses, with the understanding that their operations were to become self-sufficient as soon as possible.

Like their PKS counterparts, Hidayatullah schools use an integrated curriculum that blends religious lessons into all portions of the curriculum. Hidayatullah officials prefer to refer to their curriculum, however, as "integral" (Ind. *integral*) rather than *terpadu,* although they admit that its aims are similar.[63] Notwithstanding the school movement's commitment to the virtues of simplicity and modesty, intellectual activity is greatly prized, and pedagogy makes generous use of discussion groups and outside speakers.

As also with PKS schools, Hidayatullah educators understand their mission of integration as including participation in the affairs of the surrounding community. Hidayatullah officers point out, however, that in three other respects their understanding of integration differs from that of the PKS. First, and in keeping with its emphasis on egalitarianism and asceticism, Hidayatullah gives priority to the poor and lower-middle class rather than the middle and upper-middle classes drawn to PKS schools. School officials explain that they see their segment of the educational market as the *mustad'afin,* the downtrodden and oppressed. In its early years, the Hidayatullah school in

Balikpapan charged no tuition, but the policy proved unworkable as the school movement grew. Rather than giving full scholarships, then, school directors appealed to local businesses to sponsor the education of children. At a Hidayatullah school in Central Java that I visited in 2005, businesspeople from the city provided full subsidies of Rp 85,000 per month (approximately US$9 at the time) for 56 of the school's 263 students. A somewhat greater number of students received partial scholarships, also as a result of the generosity of business patrons.[64]

A second and related difference that Hidayatullah officials cite in distinguishing their schools from those of the PKS concerns the Hidayatullah's willingness to recruit students from diverse doctrinal backgrounds. In the words of the secretary of the regional Hidayatullah office in Yogyakarta:

> We don't fill our schools with just one group [*kelompok*]. We say "please enter" to people from all other groups. If you happen to be from PKS, Hizbut Tahrir, even Nahdlatul Ulama, it's no problem. This is our big difference with PKS. With them, if they learn that a person is not from their group, that fact has to be evaluated when considering a student for admission.... But our concern is to build an Islamic civilization, and there's no way that can be done if you walk alone.[65]

This second difference is in turn related to another of Hidayatullah's foundational principles. Rather than striving for ideological purity, the leadership speaks of its organization as (in the words again of the above Yogyakarta officer) "just one organization among other Islamic organizations, and we don't want to consider ourselves the only one that is true." There are nonetheless two ideological principles to which all members are expected to subscribe. First, all associates must agree with the goal of implementing Islamic law in an all-encompassing (*kaffah*) manner. And second, all must reject the "Western" values of secularism, pluralism (here understood to refer to the belief that all religions are equal), and liberalism.

The third and final way in which Hidayatullah's understanding of integration differs from that of the PKS has to do with its linkage of schools with business enterprise and the broader Muslim community. Reflecting once again the organization's egalitarian ethos, officials say

that leadership should be "rolling" (Ind. *roling,* from the English). This means that senior members in the organization are expected at some point to rotate back into leadership positions in the school and the movement, in an effort to refresh the leadership, distribute the economic burdens associated with being a leader, and broaden ties to the community. A related feature of this principle is that the movement expects senior students to set up businesses even before they complete their studies, with the understanding that the business will be used to recruit new members and raise funds for the mother school. After graduating, young businesspeople are expected to maintain ties with their school or "base" (the English term is used). Some are provided with start-up funds. However, once the enterprise is established, grads are expected to donate 10 percent of their net income to the movement.

In 1986, students at the Surabaya Institute of Technology opened what was to become a particularly influential branch of the organization. It was activists at this school who, in 1988, launched the *Voice of Hidayatullah* (*Suara Hidayatullah*), a monthly journal that at its peak had a circulation of 50 thousand (today the figure is about 35 thousand).[66] Since 1999, the Surabaya office has also managed an on-line web version of the journal. The website's fierce broadsides against liberalism, secularism, and the West, and its accusations of Western (especially American) meddling in eastern Indonesia's sectarian violence, earned it a lively readership among campus Islamists in the early 2000s, for whom the violence in eastern Indonesia had become a rallying cry. However, the journal's allegations of Western conspiracies, and its reluctance to speak out against terrorist violence, has also caused disquiet among the new generation of officials who assumed leadership at the Balikpapan headquarters in the early 2000s.[67] On several occasions, Balikpapan officials have appealed to the journal editors to tone down their broadsides.

Notwithstanding these tensions, in 2000, the Hidayatullah announced that it was turning itself into a national political movement, while continuing to operate its network of schools. The movement's aims are described in religious rather than concretely political terms. In particular, the movement is dedicated to the creation of an Islamic civilization based on the Qur'an and Sunna as "blueprint."[68] Movement leaders and publications play down any interest in the establishment of a state other than that of the currently existing Indonesian state.

In 2002–2003, the Hidayatullah attracted unwelcome national attention when several of its branches were accused of recruiting fighters for the Christian–Muslim conflict in Maluku. Equally serious, it was alleged that several officers had provided refuge for Jemaah Islamiyah activists implicated in bomb attacks on civilians.[69] Balikpapan leaders with whom I spoke in 2004 and again during a visit to the East Kalimantan campus in December 2005 spoke openly about the disquiet these incidents had caused. They acknowledged that members had disagreed over the proper policy to adopt in the face of the Maluku conflict. They also admitted that, at the height of the violence, activists at several branches had acted in ways that violated the movement's nonviolent principles. Headquarter officials added that the Jakarta and Balikpapan headquarters had now both resolved to steer clear of radical political involvements. At the movement's national meeting in 2005, representatives renounced any association with groups advocating radical change or violence.[70]

In short, both the PKS and Hidayatullah offer examples of schools instrumentalized as social movements and dedicated to the nonviolent but comprehensive transformation of state and society. The schools aim not only to impart knowledge and piety, but to construct interpretive frames and organizations capable of curing society's ills through the comprehensive realization of God's law. Both movements also agree that, for the time being, the bases of the state can be nationalist. At the same time, both movements emphasize the comprehensiveness and purity of the *shari'a,* implying that at some future time the foundations of the state will change as a result of society's peaceful Islamization.

Not all social-movement schools in contemporary Indonesia agree with the PKS and Hidayatullah on this last point. Some take strong exception to any accommodation with nationalism. In the post-Soeharto era, a few of these schools even became involved in violent challenges to the Indonesian state.

EDUCATION AGAINST NATION

Like with those associated with the Persatuan Islam (Persis, Islamic Unity),[71] since the early decades of the twentieth century there have always been Muslim educators who taught that nationalism is antithetical to Islam. Although Persis schools were careful not to endorse violence,

most remained resolutely opposed to nationalism as the basis of the state. Organizations like Hizbut Tahrir make a similar point today, adding that nationalism was invented by European imperialists to prevent Muslims from uniting in opposition to Western hegemony.[72] During most of Soeharto's New Order, educators who dared to voice sentiments like these could find themselves dismissed or even imprisoned, so people who harbored these views tended to keep them to themselves.

The criticism never stopped entirely, however. Even under Soeharto, a small network of independent schools continued to use classrooms as platforms for opposing the Indonesian nation-state. The schools most consistently involved in this effort were linked to a irredentist wing of the Darul Islam (DI), an armed movement that had rebelled against the nationalist government in 1948 and announced the establishment of an Islamic state.[73] Today there are dozens of schools in South Sulawesi, Central Java, parts of Sumatra, and especially West Java that are operated by individuals once linked to the DI movement. However, the great majority of these schools have long since accommodated themselves to the Indonesian state and nationalism. Indeed, some, like the enormous al-Zaytun pesantren in Indramayu, West Java, have long since modernized their curricula, forged cordial ties with government ministries (including the Department of Religion), and transformed themselves into ardent supporters of the Indonesian nation.[74] Nonetheless, a smaller network of schools sympathetic to the DI's founding radicalism maintained itself over the long years of the New Order. In the post-Soeharto era several emerged from underground and threw themselves into politics. In schools of this sort today, the curriculum is often used as a platform for relentless ideological assaults. These schools teach that the principles of nationalism stand in such flagrant violation of God's commands that not to oppose them is to commit a grave sin.

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's al-Mukmin pesantren outside of Solo, Central Java, is perhaps the most famous of the schools whose curricular materials take exception to the Indonesian nation-state in this way. It should be noted that, in most respects, the al-Mukmin curriculum is not the least bit radical. With funding from the Saudi-financed Indonesian Council for Islamic Proselytization (DDII), the al-Mukmim school was founded in 1972 by Ba'asyir and the late Abdullah Sungkar. At the time, both were activists in the Central Javanese wing of the DDII. Both also took a radical turn in the late 1980s, joining the un-

derground wing of the Darul Islam. They eventually broke with the DI, but only to establish their own, more radical organization, which in the 1990s became the nucleus for the Jemaah Islamiyah.

On most matters of educational methods and content, Ba'asyir and Sungkar were not radical but conservative modernists. Ba'asyir was a graduate of the renowned modernist boarding school at Gontor, and al-Mukmin implemented a fairly conventional modernist curriculum. It combined general studies and high-quality instruction in foreign languages (Arabic and English) with study of the Qur'an and Sunna (but not the classical texts prized in traditionalist schools).

On such sensitive matters as relations with non-Muslims and the bases of the state, however, al-Mukmin's message was and is still today uncompromising. For example, on the question of nationalism and the foundation of the state, textbooks 1A and 1B of the pesantren's *Study Materials on Aqidah* (Materi Pelajaran Aqidah)[75] make the following statement (the text is used for al-Mukmin's upper-level elementary-, middle-, and high-school madrasas):

> To act for reasons of nation is polytheistic idolatry, and polytheism destroys the values of the Islamic profession of the faith. Truly, a Muslim is forbidden to defend his country except if its rules and constitution are based on Islam. If the country is based on Islam and carries out God's law, then a Muslim may act to defend the country, because in this case such an act is the same as defending Islam. However, if one acts to defend a country that clearly refuses God's law then that is polytheism.[76]

Polytheism is one of the most loathsome sins in Islam, and equating nationalism with polytheism is harsh condemnation indeed. As for those Muslims who insist that it is not appropriate to implement God's law in a country as religiously diverse as Indonesia, the text has an equally blunt message: "That is the reason God ordered Muslims to attack them [nonbelievers] until truly the chaos that results from their actions can be wiped out, and truly the regulations that are applied to this world are only those of God's law, *shari'a Islam.*"[77] Pages 34 to 38 of the same *Aqidah* textbook go further, laying out a program of struggle for the implementation of Islamic law. The program has three stages: (1) building a community of believers in opposition to

unbelievers; (2) preparing a well-organized army; and (3) developing a facility in the use of firearms. Others among Ngruki's texts warn students against the dangers of befriending non-Muslims and even mingling with inobservant Muslims.

It is interesting to note that, although the radical intent of passages like these seems apparent enough, some students at al-Mukmin hear the text's message in an accommodating manner. In fact, many of al-Mukmin's students graduate and go on to state universities and otherwise ordinary careers in business and education. Of the seven Ngruki students my research team has interviewed since 2003, five insisted that they had no interest in opposing the nationalist bases of the Indonesian state. Several pointed out that, although some of Ngruki's students are politically radical, the majority are not. Most students, these interviewees explained, are drawn to Ngruki because of the quality of its educational programs and the availability of generous scholarships. They pointed out (and educators at nearby Islamic schools agreed) that Ngruki has a reputation for providing some of the finest instruction in all of Central Java in Arabic, English, and computer software.

In interviews, even some teachers expressed embarrassment over Ngruki's ties to the 2002 Bali bombers and insisted that they and their colleagues want nothing to do with terrorism. One teacher added that, in the 2004 parliamentary elections, most of the staff had turned away from the school's previously favored party, the Crescent and Stars Party (PBB), a conservative Islamist party loosely descendant from the Masyumi Party of the 1950s (and an advocate of a state-leveraged implementation of Islamic law). Most faculty cast their vote instead for the moderately Islamist Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). One teacher pointed to the vote as evidence that a more "moderate" current was in the ascendance at Ngruki.[78]

Whatever the Ngruki staffers' personal views, the school's curriculum makes it clear that the directors regard the present form of the Indonesian state as illegitimate. In interviews and statements, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir has not backed away from these views, emphasizing that both nationalism and democracy violate God's law. His former colleague and cofounder of al-Mukmin, Abdullah Sungkar, is known to have been even more adamant in these views. To judge by the behavior of groups like the Jemaah Islamiyah, some of Sungkar and Ba'asyir's former students—especially those who had had the additional

experience of participating in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan[79]—have taken al-Mukmin's curriculum at its word.

Saudi-Inspired Salafiyyah Schools

There are other Islamist groups unsympathetic to nationalism but uninterested in channeling their objections into efforts to overthrow the Indonesian state. The most significant representative of these relatively "apolitical" groups is the Saudi-inspired Salafiyyah or Wahhabi-Salafi school movement. This network of schools arguably strains our social-movement metaphor to the limit. Although based in Muslim society, the Wahhabi-Salafi schools are heavily dependent on the financial aid and intellectual guidance of Middle Eastern patrons. Although from 1999 to 2001 the Salafi leadership momentarily united around the issue of anti-Christian jihad in Maluku, the national leadership has otherwise been so fractiously disunited that it hardly looks like a movement at all.

Estimates vary as to the precise number of Wahhabi-Salafi schools now operating in Indonesia. Researchers in Yogyakarta and Jakarta with whom I worked from 2005 to 2007 estimated that their numbers have grown from a handful in the early 1980s to upwards of two hundred today. That is still only a tiny percentage of Indonesia's 47 thousand Islamic schools. Moreover, by Indonesian standards, most of the schools are small, having only 70–150 students. The most active among them, however, have proved adept at overcoming their numerical marginality through their skillful use of old media like bookstores and new media like the Internet.[80]

Although the terms *salafi* and *salafiyyah* have long been used to refer to reformists inspired by great nineteenth-century modernists like Muhammad Abduh, in recent years they have come to be identified with the peculiarly puritanical strain of Islamic reformism associated with Saudi-inspired Salafism. In the Indonesian setting, the most striking feature of this movement is not an ambition to overthrow the state but the desire to implement a strict and putatively literalist interpretation of the shari'a in personal life. Saudi-inspired Salafis place great emphasis on strict gender segregation and conservative dress. The latter includes an enveloping black veil (*niqab*) for women when they appear in public, and white turbans, long robes (*jalabiyya*), and trousers cut at the ankle (*isbal,* said to be the style of trousers worn

by the Prophet) for men. Here is a construction of the personal as political indeed: "A commitment to wear the *jalabiyya* by men and the *niqab* by women . . . has been viewed as much more important than taking part in political activities."[81] After marriage, women are forbidden to work or even leave the home unless accompanied by a male relative. Wahhabi Salafis are also fiercely opposed to Islamic mysticism, philosophical speculation, democratic government, and all manner of Western entertainments. Most are unhesitantly anti-Semitic and anti-Christian.

Indonesia has long had a prominent Arab-Indonesian population, and since the early twentieth century some in the community have dedicated themselves to styles of Islamic reform closer to the puritanical variants popular in the Arab Middle East. Established in the early years of the twentieth century, al-Irshad was one such reformist organization. Its educational and social-welfare programs were similar to those of the moderate modernist organization, the Muhammadiyah. However, unlike the Muhammadiyah, al-Irshad directed its social and educational services toward the Dutch Indies' small Arab population and encouraged its followers to adopt an "outward orientation, back to the Middle East from whence their fathers had come."[82] The pattern of maintaining educational and family ties to the Middle East has remained a distinctive feature of al-Irshad culture to this day.

Although Arab Indonesians have been disproportionately represented in the ranks of the Wahhabi Salafi movement that rose to prominence in the late 1990s, the latter owes its origins less to Arab-Indonesians than it does to the largesse of Saudi Arabian and Gulf-state donors. In the 1970s, the DDII became the dedicated representative of the Saudi-funded World Muslim League in Indonesia. With the growth of oil revenues in the early 1970s and a ferocious rivalry with Revolutionary Iran after 1979, the Saudi government poured funds into Indonesia and other Muslim-majority countries. They provided scholarships for study in Saudi Arabia, established an Institute for the Study of Islam and Arabic in Jakarta (LIPIA, which operates under the auspices of the Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University of Riyad), sponsored the opening of Salafi publishing houses, and, as the number of educated Salafi leaders grew, built Islamic schools and mosques.[83] Although few in number compared to Indonesia's mainstream organizations, the new Salafis commanded such resources that,

by the mid-1990s, the movement had become an important stream in Muslim politics and culture.

Although in the Indonesian setting Wahhabi Salafism can be classified as type of Islamism, the group's political behavior differs from that of groups like the Prosperous Justice Party, the Hidayatullah movement, or the Council of Indonesian Mujahidin (MMI). These latter groups agree on the need to Islamize society and eventually create something roughly equivalent to an Islamic state. If pressed, Wahhabi Salafis acknowledge that they also believe there is a need for an Islamic *ruler,* but most quickly add that the form of government over which the ruler presides need not be an "Islamic state" (*negara Islam*).

In fact, in general Salafis distinguish their approach to religion and politics from that of other Islamists in two ways. First, they point out, the implementation of shari'a must begin with one's self, one's family and neighbors, rather than with the state or politics in the formal sense of the latter term. More specifically, Salafis enjoin their followers to model their lives on the example of the "pious ancestors" (*ahl-i al-salaf*), that is, the first three generations of the Muslim community. The first imperative of Muslims is to organize their personal lives in accord with the model provided by these early forebears. Having done this, true Muslims are then enjoined to engage in ethical education (*tarbiyah*) and the purification (*tasfiya*) of all aspects of their lives. The cumulative effect of efforts like these, Salafis argue, is that society itself will slowly change and, at some point, the state will become Islamic.

The second element in the Wahhabi Salafi platform is the principle that, so long as a ruler does not prevent Muslims from carrying out their religious duties, his subjects may not rebel. Even in those instances where a ruler does impede the performance of one's religious duties, Salafis insist, rebellion is allowed only if formally authorized by recognized Salafi scholars. This restriction on the right to rebel is, of course, not unique to Wahhabi Salafis; it builds on a Sunni tradition of political quietism first developed among religious scholars in the Islamic middle ages.[84]

In practice if not principle, however, Salafi politics can prove slipperier than these simple principles imply. In the years just after the toppling of President Soeharto in May 1998, the largest faction in Indonesia's Salafi movement invoked the second principle to justify a vigorous mobilization against the government. Most famously, from

late 1999 to 2002, Jafar Umar Thalib, the founder and commander of the Laskar Jihad militia, rallied his followers to jihad against Christians in Maluku and against President Abdurrahman Wahid in Jakarta. Thalib justified his positions on the grounds that the president was not really a Muslim, but was instead, as Thalib told me, a "communist" and more a friend of Christians and Zionists than of Muslims.[85]

In a dissertation on the paramilitary wing of the FKASWJ, the Laskar Jihad, Noorhaidi Hasan captured vividly the way in which Thalib used school networks and religious frames to diagnose the national situation and offer a radical solution:

> Utilizing pre-existing networks and interpersonal bonds formed through his activism in the Salafi movement, Jafar Umar Thalib mobilized thousands of Salafis and other aspirant *mujahids* to join Laskar Jihad. Through conspiracy rhetoric blaming Zionist and Christian international powers for the escalation of the Moluccan conflict, he created a pretext for collective action that encouraged an analytic shift from individuals to groups. Based on this pretext, which was strengthened and legitimized by *fatawas* from prominent religious authorities in the Middle East, the Salafis justified their actions and created a new collective identity as heroes for their religion and fellow faithful and as patriots for their beloved state.[86]

By 2002, the Salafiyyah movement was in tumult, however, as leaders opposed to Thalib's adventurism accused him of having deviated from Salafi principles. In the aftermath of the October 2002 bombings in Bali, criticism of Thalib intensified, and he was finally obliged to dissolve his paramilitary. Enrollment in his pesantren soon tumbled. The ascendant faction in the national Salafi movement then added insult to injury by urging that Thalib be shunned. Since 2005, Thalib has played an only marginal role in organized Salafi activities. He has instead taken to appearing on television with populist televangelist preachers, participating in Sufi recitations of the names of God (activities decried by strict Salafis), and trying to reconstitute a small following by devoting himself to apolitical preaching.

Notwithstanding Thalib's downward spiral, the Wahhabi Salafi movement in Indonesia is alive and well. Although its current leadership

urges followers to steer clear of politics, the movement's social networks and cultural framing still resonate with a small community of Muslims frustrated by the swirling change, pervasive corruption, and permissive consumption of the post-Soeharto era. Although their numbers may not grow significantly in the immediate future, Salafi schools continue to receive substantial funding from Saudi and Gulf patrons. As a result, they will likely continue to exercise an influence in Muslim educational circles disproportionate to their numbers in society.

HORN OF A DILEMMA: MUSLIM EDUCATORS AND THE SHARI`A

The larger question raised by the phenomenon of social-movement schools is just what the attitude of the majority of educators is on questions like democracy, pluralism, non-Muslims, and women. In an effort to answer these questions, in January 2006 I worked with staff at the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) at the Hidayatullah National Islamic University in Jakarta to carry out a survey of 940 Muslim educators in a hundred madrasas and Islamic boarding schools in eight provinces in Indonesia. The survey was codirected by Dr. Jamhari of the PPIM and coordinated in the field by eight staff members from the PPIM. The interviews were carried out by senior college students hired and trained by the PPIM in each of the eight provinces. The full survey had 184 questions, the aggregate results of which are too complex to present here. However, the second column of Table 2.1 summarizes the data that dealt with Muslim educators' attitudes toward democracy and the shari'a. The first column presents data from a near-identical survey of a thousand members of the general Muslim public in eight regions across Indonesia. This survey, too, was carried out by PPIM researchers, who kindly shared their findings, allowing a comparison of the general Muslim public's views with those of Muslim educators.

These survey data reveal several striking facts, the most interesting of which concerns the Muslim public's and educators' views on democracy and the shari'a. On one hand, an impressive 71.6 percent of the Muslim public and 85.9 percent of Muslim educators agree that democracy is the best form of government for Indonesia. Equally striking, neither the public's nor the educators' support is formalistic or based on a crudely majoritarian understanding of democracy. Rather, the public's and the educators' views extend to subtle matters of civil rights, including support for the equality of all citizens

before the law, no matter what their political persuasion (82.8% for the general public, 94.2% for Muslim educators); citizens' freedom to join political organizations (79.5% and 82.5% respectively); legal protections for the media from arbitrary government action (78.6% and 92.8%); and the notion that open party competition helps to improve the performance of government (74.7% and 80%). These figures are comparable to or even higher than survey data on similar issues from Western Europe and the United States.[87]

Before exploring the public's and educators' views on the shari'a, it is important to highlight one other feature of the survey data. With only minor exceptions, Muslim educators' commitment to democratic values is stronger than the already high level of support provided by the Muslim public. The educators' support for democracy and civil rights should dispel any impression that the religious establishment as a whole is a reactionary drag on an otherwise pluralist public.

Table 2.1. Muslim Attitudes on Democracy and Islam

	SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY		
No.	*Percentage who agreed with the following statements*	*2004*[a]	*2006*[b]
1.	Democracy, compared to other forms of governance, is the best form of government for a country like ours.	71.6%	85.9%
2.	Democracy is a source of political disorder.	7.0%	8.1%
3.	Every citizen is equal before the law regardless of his or her political views.	82.8%	94.2%
4.	Every citizen should be allowed to join any political organization.	79.5%	82.5%
5.	Mass media should be protected by law from the arbitrary actions of government.	78.6%	92.8%
6.	Our economy will be better if the government gives more freedom to each citizen to do as he or she wishes.	76.9%	73.4%
7.	Free and fair contestation between political parties improves the performance of government of this country.	74.7%	80%

SUPPORT FOR SHARI`A AND ISLAMISM

No.	*Percentage who agreed with the following statements*	*2004*[a]	*2006*[b]
1.	Islamic governance, i.e., governance based on the Qur'an and Sunna under the leadership of Islamic authorities, is the best for this nation.	72.2%	72.2%
2.	The state should enforce the obligation to implement Islamic law (*shari'a*) for all Muslims.	75.5%	82.8%
3.	The amputation of the hand of a thief as prescribed in the Qur'an should be enforced by the government.	38.9%	59.1%
4.	In general elections Muslims should only elect candidates who understand and fight for the implementation of Islamic teachings in the polity.	59.5%	63.9%
5.	In general elections voters should only support Islamic parties.	29.5%	24.3%
6.	Muslims who do not perform their religious duties should not be allowed to be members of the People's Consultative Assembly or Parliament.	45.6%	74.3%
7.	The ideals and practices of Islamic organizations (such as Darul Islam, Negara Islam Indonesia, Front Pembela Islam, Laskar Jihad, etc.) to implement Islamic law (*shari'a*) in the society and polity should be supported.	55.6%	64.4%
8.	The practices of polygyny should be allowed.	33.0%	75.7%
9.	Females should not be not allowed to take long trips without being accompanied by a close family member or relative.	60.7%	79.6%
10.	The government (police) should engage in surveillance so as to make sure that Muslims perform the Ramadan fast.	33.0%	49.9%
11.	The government (police) should close restaurants during Ramadan.	69.3%	82.9%
12.	The government (police) should engage in surveillance (*mengawasi*) to make sure that two persons (male and female) walking together in the street are either married or relatives.	43.7%	66.6%

[a] 2004 percentages are based on a survey of 1,000 members of the general Muslim public in eight provinces across Indonesia.

[b] 2006 data are based on a survey of 940 Muslim teachers in secondary-level Islamic schools (madrasas and pesantrens) in eight provinces.

The second row of figures on the public's and the educators' support for aspects of the shari'a is equally striking. Notwithstanding the strength of their commitment to democracy, 72.2 percent of the public and educators believe that the state should be based on the Qur'an and Sunna and guided by religious experts. A full 75.5 percent of the public and 82.8 percent of educators think the state should work to implement the shari'a. Public support for the shari'a wobbles on a few issues. It drops to 38.9 percent for the general public and 59.1 percent for educators with regard to the amputation of thieves' hands. It also falls with regard to government efforts to require performance of the Ramadan fast (33% of the public, and 49.9% of educators agree). On these matters, at least, some educators and even more of the general public appear to have second thoughts about a too strict implementation of the law. Nonetheless, when asked whether inobservant Muslims should be allowed to serve in the National Assembly, half of the public and three-fourths of the educators feel they should not. A full 55.6 percent of the public and 64.4 percent of educators agree with Muslim militants' campaigns to implement Islamic law.

These data provide a glimpse into a serious cultural dilemma for Indonesian Muslims. The Muslim public's and educators' stated commitments to democracy, rights of political association, and press freedoms are about as strong as they are anywhere in the democratic world. However, where a democratic principle runs up against an issue on which the shari'a and its interpreters have something important to say, the majority of people feel that piety requires that they defer to conventional understandings of the shari'a. This deference results in judgments that many observers, including most Muslim democrats, would regard as inconsistent with democracy.

The survey data suggest two other conclusions. On one hand, the Muslim public's commitment to democracy bears witness to one of the most remarkable changes in Muslim political culture in modern times: the fact that growing numbers of Muslims see democracy as compatible with Islam and as vital to good government. Here is a cultural globalization of far-reaching political importance, but one often overlooked in discussions of modern Muslim politics.[88]

Second, and somewhat less brightly, the public's commitment to democracy appears to exist in uneasy tension with an almost equally strong commitment to the shari'a. Most Muslim political theorists of

democratic persuasion regard a literalist implementation of the shari'a as incompatible with modern democracy.[89] One might be tempted to say that the data point to a clash of cultures between the values of democracy and those of the shari'a as conventionally understood.

However, the tension between shari'a and democracy may not be as great as the survey data first suggest. However much the Muslim public voices support for the shari'a in opinion surveys, that support does not result in the majority of Muslims voting for parties committed to the implementation of Islamic law. All of the political parties that made implementing the shari'a a central feature of their political platforms fared poorly in the 1999 and 2004 elections. My interviews with two hundred educators between 2004 and 2007 revealed a similar pattern: fewer than 30 percent gave their support to Islamist parties advocating the long-term implementation of shari'a, and fewer than 10 percent voted for parties advocating its immediate implementation.

Does this mean that the data indicating broad support for shari'a are inaccurate or, alternately (as some Indonesian bloggers have suggested), that Indonesian Muslims are hypocrites? The discrepancy between the poll data and election results can be interpreted in several ways, but based on interviews over the past five years, I think it reflects two primary influences. First, it shows that, like their counterparts in much of the world, Indonesian Muslims have concluded that the shari'a is God's guidance for humanity and, as such, must be just and true. Second, and notwithstanding the hopes of radical Islamists, for most Muslims this generalized understanding does not generate clear and specific procedures for how to act or govern politically, even with regard to Islamic law. Rather than agreeing with radical Islamist claims that the shari'a is clear and unchanging and that implementation of it will solve all of Indonesia's problems, then, most Muslims are uncertain as to the law's practical entailments, and thus prefer an empirical approach to social problems. These findings "from the field," so to speak, are consistent with recent scholarship on Islamic law, which has emphasized that in its social uses the shari'a is as much or even more a "vocabulary of morality and justice" than it is an entity akin to Western positive law.[90]

If this conclusion is correct, it means that the educators' and public's commitment to the shari'a is real but also, so to speak, procedurally vague. It coexists with an equally important conviction that

solving problems of unemployment and corruption requires pragmatic empirical instruments, not just absolute notions of the good. Parties or actors who can demonstrate that implementing shari'a can solve practical problems may yet be able to tap this otherwise amorphous reservoir of public support for God's law. But those who simply repeat that the law is the panacea for all social problems will not necessarily be rewarded with public support.

CONCLUSION

In an article published in 1960, a young anthropologist named Clifford Geertz surveyed the state of Islamic education in Indonesia, directing his gaze toward the pesantren and the figure of its director, known in Java as *kyai.* Geertz observed that the rise of nationalism in Indonesia had displaced many traditional regional leaders and created a dangerous gap between the country's new secular-nationalist leaders and a citizenry "still largely absorbed" in "a plurality of distinct regional cultures."[91] Geertz also speculated that the kyai might be uniquely situated to mediate this divide by serving as a cultural broker between an otherwise distant national leadership and the great mass of Muslims.

It is the conclusion to Geertz's article, however, that reads so evocatively today. If the kyai was to be an effective broker, Geertz observed, Islamic education was going to have to change:

> Only through the creation of a school at once as religiously satisfying to the villager as the pesantren, and as instrumentally functional to the growth of the "new Indonesia" as the state-run secular schools can the kijaji [*kyai*] . . . become a man once more competent to stand guard "over the crucial junctures of synapses of relationships which connect the local system with the larger whole." . . . Failing this, the kijaji's days as a dominant force in pious Javanese villages are numbered, and the role of Islam in shaping the directions of political evolution in Indonesia is likely to be marginal at best.[92]

Leaping ahead a half-century from the time of Geertz's fieldwork, it is startling to realize that much of the educational transformation Geertz envisioned has actually taken place. Indonesia's Islamic schools have

taken giant steps to span the gap between general and religious education. They have built bridges between Islamic and non-Islamic higher education, in the process creating one of the world's finest Islamic university systems.[93]

Much as Geertz had hypothesized (even while hinting its actual achievement was improbable), the reconstruction of Islamic education has also buttressed the "role of Islam in shaping the directions of political evolution in Indonesia." On this last point, however, recent events in Indonesia have proved more complicated than even Geertz imagined. Rather than enhancing the role of the kyai and creating a neatly unified community of believers, Muslim Indonesia has witnessed a fractious pluralization of schools, movements, and authority. The old division between Islamic modernists and traditionalists has not entirely disappeared, but it has been twisted and bent to such a degree that, as Zamakhsyari Dhofier noted in the 1980s, "the traditionalist-modernist dichotomy has ceased to be fruitful" in political and cultural analyses.[94]

In one respect, this pluralization has been enormously beneficial for Muslim intellectual and educational development. The process has unleashed a creative competition for Muslim hearts and minds, expressed in myriad political parties, a bold Islamic publishing industry, and innovative Islamic schools. Equally impressive, many Muslim players have concluded that the way to handle the new pluralism is for everyone to agree to play by the rules of a democratic game.

Unfortunately, the pluralization of Muslim schooling and authority has also given rise to a rejectionist minority willing and able to defy the will of the majority. This community rejects democracy, nationalism, and modern citizenship as antithetical to Islam. Far more worrying, a fringe among the rejectionists has framed its stance as a clash, not between varied interpretations of Islam, but between godlessness and religion. This frame is so absolutist that, if one accepts its terms, actions of the most extreme sort appear justified. While only a tiny proportion of Indonesia's Islamic schools subscribe to this message, the fringe has not hesitated to use violence to achieve its ends.

It is important, however, to keep the radicalism in perspective. Indonesia has 47 thousand Islamic schools. Of these, schools advocating the violent overthrow of the state number only several dozens. For every radical school, there are hundreds operated by the Muham-

madiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and like-minded organizations committed to multireligious nationalism. The great majority of these latter schools are not "liberal" in the modern American sense of the term; but they are keen on both the idea of Indonesia and the country's experiment with democracy. Moreover, whereas in a country like Egypt Islamists have moved into the vacuum created by the state's inability to provide basic services for the poor,[95] in Indonesia services of this sort have long since been provided by mass organizations of a moderate or moderately conservative sort. Although their mettle was tested in the crisis years of 1958–1966, these mainline groups today have reestablished themselves as pillars of Indonesian civil society.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there are unresolved tensions in Indonesian Muslim politics and education. We catch a glimpse of those tensions in mainstream educators' unhesitant commitment to both democracy and the shari'a. The commitment to Islamic law, of course, has to be balanced against the fact that, in the voting booth, most Muslims—and most Muslim educators—continue to lend their support to political parties supportive of the multireligious ideals of Indonesian nationalism. Here is a cultural current that will continue to run through Muslim politics and culture for years to come.

These varied data, then, point to three conclusions: that debates over the role of shari'a in public life are likely to remain a key feature of Indonesian education and politics for some time; that the public's stated interest in shari'a does not preempt all other concerns; and that the public's desire to implement the shari'a in an uncontextualized manner will not likely increase unless its aspiration for good government and social justice is frustrated.

Of course, this prognosis leaves the precise nature of Muslim politics in tomorrow's Indonesia unclear. But it hints at another no less important trend, this one in the educational field. It is that Muslim schools will remain central to efforts to resolve the tensions of modern Muslim politics and culture in a peaceful and forward-looking way. In other words, contrary to what we heard a generation ago, Islamic schools will not be pushed to the margins of the modern Muslim experience, but will remain at its heart. The reason this is so is that schooling offers a unique formula for answering the question of how to carry Muslims forward into a modernity at once plural and open-minded yet religious.

NOTES

1. The curricular reforms centered on two changes: opening the state Islamic university curriculum to new subjects and methodologies through the incorporation of such general fields of study as medicine, psychology, sociology, and business; and, no less significant, opening the Islamic studies component of the curriculum to historical studies, comparative religion, and philosophy in addition to the classical Islamic sciences. For an early overview of the reforms, see Zamakhsyari Dhofier, "The Intellectualization of Islamic Studies in Indonesia," in *Indonesia and the Malay World* 28, no. 58 (1992), pp. 19–31; for a more recent overview, see Muhammad Zuhdi, "Modernization of Indonesian Islamic Schools' Curricula, 1945–2003," *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 10, nos. 4–5 (July 2006), pp. 415–27. On the development and intellectual impact of comparative religious studies in state Islamic universities, see Karel A. Steenbrink, "The Study of Comparative Religion by Indonesian Muslims," *Numen* 37, no. 2 (1990), pp. 141–67; on the use of critical analytic methods in the curricular study of Islam, see Abdullah Saeed, "Towards Religious Tolerance through Reform in Islamic Education: The Case of the State Institute of Islamic Studies of Indonesia," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 27 no. 79 (1999), pp. 177–91.

2. On the role of students from state Islamic universities in the democracy movement, see Richard G. Kraince, "The Role of Islamic Student Activists in Divergent Movements for Reform during Indonesia's Transition from Authoritarian Rule, 1998–2001" (Ph.D. diss., College of Education, Ohio University, 2003); and Edward Aspinall, *Opposing Suharto: Compromise, Resistance, and Regime Change in Indonesia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 121, 127.

3. On the paramilitaries, see Robert W. Hefner, "Muslim Democrats and Islamist Violence in Post-Soeharto Indonesia," in Robert W. Hefner, *Remaking Muslim Politics: Pluralism, Contestation, Democratization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 273–301. For a comprehensive analysis of the genealogy of Indonesia's radical Islamism, see Andrée Feillard and Rémy Madinier, *La fin de l'innocence? L'Islam Indonésien face à la tentation radicale de 1967 à nos jours* (Paris: IRASEC, 2006), pp. 95–151; and Martin van Bruinessesn, "Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism in post-Suharto Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 10, no. 2 (July 2002), pp. 117–54.

4. See Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia: Crucible of Terror* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003); Abuza presents a more nuanced overview of the JI in his subsequent book, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).

5. See "Sidik Jari Kalla Menggoyang Pondok" [Kalla's Fingerprints Shake the Islamic Boarding Schools], *Tempo,* December 18, 2005, pp. 38–39.

6. Two important examples of this genre are Nasir Abas, *Membongkar Jamaah Islamiyah: Pengakuan Mantan Anggota JI* [To Break up Jemaah Islamiyah: Report from a Former Member of the JI] (Jakarta: Grafindo, 2005), and Luqman bin Muhammad Ba'abduh, *Sebuah Tinjauan Syari'at: Mereka Adalah Teroris!* [A Perspective from Shari'a: They Are Terrorists!] (Malang: Pustaka Qalan Sadida].

7. See Azyumardi Azara, Dina Afrianty, and Robert W. Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa: Muslim Schools and National Ideals in Indonesia," in Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, eds., *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 172–98.

8. On the restricted reach of colonial-era education, see Gavin W. Jones, "Religion and Education in Indonesia," *Indonesia* 22 (1976): 19–56.

9. On Qur'anic recitation in Indonesia, see Anna M. Gade, *Perfection Makes Practice: Learning, Emotion, and the Recited Qur'ân in Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

10. See Azyumardi Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Islam Tradisional dalam Transisi dan Modernisasi* [Surau: Traditional Islamic Education in Transition and Modernization] (Jakarta: Logos, 2003).

11. On the *ijaza* in classical Islamic education, see Jonathan P. Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 31–32; and George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), pp. 140–41.

12. See Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *The* Pesantren *Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java* (Tempe: Monograph Series, Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1999), p. 19.

13. Indonesians also distinguish a kindred educational institution known as the "Islamic school" (*sekolah Islam*). In the Indonesian educational lexicon, an Islamic school refers to a school that dedicates a greater proportion of the curriculum to general education than is typical of ordinary madrasas. Founded in 1912, Indonesia's largest modernist Muslim organization, the Muhammadiyah (which, today, enjoys the support of 25–30 million Indonesians), preferred to establish schools of this sort. Since the Three Ministers' Memorandum of 1975, an "Islamic school" has also come to be understood as an institution that adheres more closely to the curricular guidelines outlined by Indonesia's Ministry of Education rather than to those provided by the educational wing of the Department of Religion. Some among the better-heeled of the Islamic schools, like the Yayasan Paramadina school in West Java, also distinguish themselves from madrasas and public schools by using innovative approaches to science, the arts, and civics.

14. See Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in West Sumatra (1927–1933)* (Ithaca, NY: Monograph Series, Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1971).

15. See Joseph Liow, Chapter 4 this volume, and Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Patani* (Bangi, Malaysia: Universiti Kebangsaan Press, 1999).

16. Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* pp. 14, 18.

17. See Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa," pp. 177–80.

18. See Eka Srimulanyi, "Muslim Women and Education in Indonsia: The Pondok Pesantren Experience," in *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 27, no. 1 (2007): 85–99. For a discussion of efforts by young Nahdlatul Ulama scholars to reform the gender content of the pesantren curriculum, see Pieternella van Doorn-Harder, *Women Shaping Islam: Reading the Qur'an in Indonesia* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006), pp. 191–200, 228–33. For an overview of Muslim feminism in Indonesia, see Andrée Feillard, "Indonesia's Emerging Muslim Feminism: Women Leaders on Equality, Inheritance, and other Gender Issues," *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (1997): 83–111.

19. On Tebuireng's educational reforms, see Ronald Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad: Negotiating Identity and Modernity in Muslim Java* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), pp. 36–38, and Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* pp. 77–115. Unlike the majority of Indonesian pesantrens, the Gontor pesantren, established in 1926, is pedagogically and doctrinally modernist. The Gontor curriculum combines intensive study of classical and modern religious commentaries with general education. Gontor has spawned many

offspring and remains a powerful influence in modernist Muslim education today. For an earlier view of the school, see Lance Castles, "Notes on the Islamic School at Gontor," in *Indonesia* 1 (1966): 30–45.

20. On Dutch educational policy and Islam, see Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation of Java, 1942–1945* (The Hague: W. Van Hoeve), pp. 27–28.

21. See the essays in Audrey R. Kahin, ed., *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution: Unity from Diversity* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985); and Anton Lucas, *One Soul, One Struggle: Region and Revolution in Indonesia* (Sydney: ASAA Southeast Asia Publication Series, Allen and Unwin, 1991).

22. See Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics;* and Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 221.

23. On the decline of pesantren enrollments in the first years of Indonesian independence, see Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* p. 22; and Sidney Jones, "The Javanese Pesantren: Between Elite and Peasantry," in Charles F. Keyes, ed., *Reshaping Local Worlds: Formal Education and Cultural Change in Rural Southeast Asia* (New Haven, CT: Monograph 36, Yale Southeast Asian Studies, 1991).

24. See Fuad Jabali and Jamhari, *IAIN dan Modernisasi Islam di Indonesia* [State Islamic Institutes and the Modernization of Islam in Indonesia] (Jakarta: UIN Jakarta Press, 2002), pp. 124–26.

25. In 1989, the terms of the 1975 agreement were strengthened with the implementation of the law on the National Education System (UUSPN, 1989). This legislation required Islamic schools to participate in the campaign to promote nine years of compulsory schooling. The law also tightened regulations enacted in the late 1960s mandating religious instruction at all class levels and in all schools for at least two hours per week.

26. According to a Department of Religion study, in 1999, 27.7% of pesantren had madrasas on their grounds. See Jabali and Jamhari, *IAIN,* p. 110. In an informal survey of eighty large pesantrens visited by members of the National Islamic University working in collaboration with the author of this report, the figure soared to over 60%.

27. On the history of Tebuireng's educational expansion, see Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 36–38; Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* pp. 89–90; and Ridwan Nasir, *Mencari Format Pendidikan Ideal: Pondok* Pesantren *di Tengah Arus Perubahan* [Searching for an Ideal Educational Format: Pesantrens in the Middle of a Changing Stream] (Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), pp. 247–325.

28. Interview with (anonymous) Gontor instructor in Jakarta, August 5, 2006.

29. For students of Indonesia's New Order politics (1966–1998), the government's accommodating manner when dealing with Islamic educators is a reminder that the regime did not always use heavy-handed measures to get its way. One reason this was so regarding Muslim education is that the Ministry of Religion responsible for conveying government wishes to the Muslim community was in the hands of some of the New Order's most gifted cabinet officers. For a discussion of one of the most important of these ministers, see Bahtiar Effendy, "Islam and the State in Indonesia: Munawir Sjadzali and the Development of a New Theological Underpinning of Political Islam," *Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies* 2, no. 2 (1995): 97–121.

30. Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* p. 22; and Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 65–66.

31. In an otherwise thoughtful overview, Sidney Jones reached a similarly pes-

simistic conclusion, writing, "The pesantren has enjoyed an unusually long life for a traditional school, but it may finally be threatened with disappearance." See Jones, "The Javanese Pesantren," p. 36.

32. Since 2002, six Institut Agama Islam Negeri have been elevated to the status of research universities by the government and are in the process of opening faculties in medicine, business, education, and the social sciences. The development of these "centers of educational excellence" is intended to break down further the dualism of Islamic and general learning. See Jabali and Jamhari, eds., *IAIN and Modernisasi.*

33. See Badri Yatim and Hamid Nasuhi, eds., *Membangun Pusat Keunggulan Studi Islam: Sejarah dan Profil Pimpinan IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 1957–2002* [Building Centers of Excellence for Islamic Studies: History and Profiles of the Leadership of the Hidayatullah IAIN, 1957–2002] (Jakarta: IAIN Press, 2002), esp. pp. 295–329.

34. On study of classical texts in traditionalist schools, see Martin van Bruinessen, "Pesantren and *Kitab Kuning:* Maintenance and Continuing of a Tradition of Religious Learning," in Wolfgang Marschall, ed., *Texts from the Islands: Oral and Written Traditions of Indonesia and the Malay World* (Bern: *Ethnologica Bernica,* no. 4, University of Bern, 1994), pp. 121–45.

35. Interview with staff, Pesantren Tebuireng, December 19, 2005.

36. For comparison, see Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 65–68.

37. On the booming market for Islamic books, and the contest for authority to which it gave rise, see C. W. Watson, "Islamic Books and Their Publishers: Notes on the Contemporary Indonesian Scene," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 16, no. 2 (2005): 177–210.

38. Interview with Mansur Zawawi, Jombang, East Java, December 10, 2005.

39. Jabali and Jamhari, *IAIN and Modernisasi,* p. 68.

40. See Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa," pp. 177–80.

41. On culture, markets, and preferences, see Michael McPherson, "Want Formation, Morality, and Some Interpretive Aspects of Economic Inquiry," in Norma Haan, Robert N. Bellah, Paul Rabinow, and William M. Sullivan, eds., *Social Science as Moral Inquiry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 96–124; and Robert W. Hefner, "The Problem of Preference: Ritual and Economic Change in Highland Java," in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 18 (1983): 669–89.

42. See Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 4; and Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Approach* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

43. The social-change orientation of Christian social movements is strikingly apparent in studies like Paul Freston's *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), and Joel Robbins, "The Globalization of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 117–43.

44. On social-movement theory's correctives to grievance-based models of social protest, see Wiktorowicz, "Introduction: Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory," in *Islamic Activism,* p. 8; and Carrie Rosefsky Wickham's *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 6–8.

45. A point vividly captured in Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* pp. 34–40. See also his "Kinship and Marriage among the Javanese Kyai," *Indonesia* 29 (1980): 47–58.

46. The classic description of *aliran*-streams was provided by the American anthro-

pologist Clifford Geertz and referred to the politicization of preexisting sociocultural currents in Indonesian (and, especially, Javanese) society in the mid-twentieth century. Geertz identified four primary political currents: communists, (secular) nationalists, modernist Muslims, and traditionalist Muslims. See Clifford Geertz, *The Social History of an Indonesian Town* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1965), pp. 127–28.

47. See David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Steven K. Worden, and Robert W. Benford, "Frame Alignment Process, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," in *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986): 461–81.

48. Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism,* p. 16; see also Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment," in *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 611–39.

49. On al-Faruqi and the Islamization of Knowledge Debate, see Mona Abaza, *Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt: Shifting Worlds* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), pp. 77–87.

50. Interview with teacher at Sekolah Dasar Islam *terpadu* in Tangerang, West Java, December 6, 2005.

51. See "Hasil Pemilu" [Election Results], at Detik.com, April 14, 2004, http://jkt.detik.com/infopemilu2004/perolehan-pemilu.shtml, and "Elections in Indonesia" at Electionworld.org: http://www.electionworld.org/indonesia.htm.

52. For an Indonesian-language overview of KAMMI's organization, see Andi Rahmat and Mukhammad Najib, *Gerakan Perlawanan dari Masjid Kampus* [An Opposition Movement from Campus Mosques] (Surakarta: Parimedia, 2001). For an incisive academic study, see Yon Machmudi, "Islamising Indonesia: The Rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah and the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)" (Ph.D. diss., Faculty of Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra, 2006).

53. On KAMMI's role in the anti-Soeharto campaign, see Robin Madrid, "Islamic Students in the Indonesian Student Movement, 1998–1999: Forces for Moderation," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 31, no. 3 (1999): 17–32.

54. On the PKS and Indonesia's 2004 elections, see Edward Aspinall, "Elections and the Normalization of Politics in Indonesia," in *South East Asia Research* 13, no. 2 (2005): 117–56, esp. 128–31, 148–54).

55. Interview with PKS leaders in Jakarta, August 7, 2003.

56. My interviews with PKS officials in Jakarta and Yogyakarta annually from 1999 to 2003 indicated that there were serious differences among leaders on the question of the *shari'a.* Some associated with regional branches in Makassar, Padang, and Surabaya were inclined to support a more "immediatist" and etatist approach to the law.

57. Interview, Yogyakarta father, August 12, 2006.

58. Interview, Tangerang, West Java, December 6, 2005.

59. Interview with Hidayatullah spokesperson, Gunung Tembak, December 17, 2005.

60. See Noorhaidi Hasan, "In Search of Identity: The Contemporary Islamic Communities in Southeast Asia," in *Studia Islamika* 7, no. 3 (November 2000): 87.

61. Anonymous interview with Hidayatullah activist, Yogyakarta, August 12, 2005. See also International Crisis Group, "Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku" (Jakarta and Brussels: ICG, Asia Report No. 31, February 8, 2002), p. 3.

62. The quote is from an unpublished study of the Hidayatullah carried out by staff at the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM) at the State Islamic University in Jakarta. See PPIM, *Pesantren Indepen: Profil dan Prospek* [Independent Pesantrens: Profiles and Prospects] (Jakarta: PPIM, UIN, 2004), p. 63.

63. Interview with Saryo SA, School Principal, Hidayatullah Elementary School, Sleman, Yogyakarta, December 20, 2005.

64. Ibid.

65. Interview with DPD Secretary for Hidayatullah Office Yogyakarta-Sleman, February 13, 2006.

66. Hasan, "In Search of Identity," p. 89.

67. Interview with Hidayatullah teachers, Gunung Tembak, Balikpapan, December 17, 2005.

68. Ibid., December 17, 2005.

69. International Crisis Group, "Jemaah Islamiyah in South East Asia: Damaged But Still Dangerous" (Jakarta and Brussels: ICG, August 26, 2003), pp. 22–23.

70. A French colleague, Gwenael Njoto-Feillard, attended the Jakarta conference and kindly provided me with this information on the discussion.

71. On Persatuan Islam and Muhammad Natsir, see Howard Federspiel, *Islam and Ideology in the Emerging Indonesian State: The Persatuan Islam (PERSIS) 1923 to 1957* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); and Robert W. Hefner, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), pp. 106–13.

72. The internationalist organization Hizbut Tahrir uses this same argument to call for the unification of all Muslim-majority states under a caliphate. Since the late 1990s, Hizbut Tahrir-Indonesia (HTI) has won a significant following on university campuses; in the early 2000s the movement's popularity grew further as a result of its spearheading opposition to U.S. policies in the Middle East. On August 13, 2007, the HTI achieved a breakthrough in its campaigns by sponsoring a rally at the Senayan stadium in Jakarta which attracted 70,000 participants. The event was given greater distinction as a result of the attendance of Din Syamsuddin, the moderately conservative head of the Muhammadiyah, and the populist Muslim preacher AA Gymnastiar. Interestingly, in his presentation, Syamsuddin took care to emphasize that the idea of the caliphate was a noble one, but only so long as it did not detract from the unity of the Indonesian nation-state.

73. See Cees van Dijk, *Rebellion under the Banner of Islam: The Darul Islam in Indonesia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981); and S. Soebardi, "Kartosuwiryo and the Darul Islam Rebellion in Indonesia," in *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 14:1 (March 1983), pp. 109–33.

74. See "Pesantren Al-Zaytun: Merumuskan Semangat Pesantren dalam Sistem Modern" [Pesantren Al-Zaytun: Formulating a Pesantren Spirit within a Modern System], in *Pesantren Independen,* pp. 220–31. In the early 2000s, al-Zaytun became the target of fierce criticism from conservative reformists who accused the school of religious deviationism. The state's Ministry of Religion dispatched investigators to the boarding school and, according to reports provided to me by several of the team members, they found no evidence of heterodox teachings or subversive political views. This was consistent with my own visit to the school and conversations with the school's director, AS Panji Gumilang, in January 2005. For an example of heated denunciation of the school, see Umar Abduh, *Membongkar Gerakan Sesat NII di Balik* Pesantren *Mewah al-Zaytun* [To Break up the Deviationist Islamic State of Indonesia Movement behind the Luxury Pesantren al-Zaytun] (Jakarta: LPPI, 2001).

75. See no author, *Aqidah 1a* and *Materi Pelajaran Aqidah 1b* (Surakarta: Pondok Pesantren Islam al-Mukmin, n.d.). I was given copies of these books in 2005 by an al-Mukmin teacher.

76. *Aqidah 1b,* p. 17.

77. *Aqidah 1a,* p. 38.

78. Interview with Ngruki instructor (name withheld at instructor's request), February 7, 2006.

79. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to analyze the origins of the Jemaah Islamiyah and other armed jihadi groups. However, in an extraordinary study, the Indonesian anthropologist Noorhaidi Hasan (a student of Martin van Bruinessen) has analyzed the origins of the Laskar Jihad and several related groups in post-Soeharto Indonesia. He highlights the central role played by participation in the Afghanistan jihad in the formation of armed jihadi leaders. See Noorhaidi Hasan, "*Laskar Jihad:* Islam, Militancy and the Quest for Identity in Post-New Order Indonesia" (Ph.D. diss., University of Utrecht, 2005), p. 44.

80. See Robert W. Hefner, "Civic Pluralism Denied? The New Media and *Jihadi* Violence in Indonesia," in Dale F. Eickelman and John W. Anderson, *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere,* 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 158–79.

81. Hasan, "*Laskar Jihad,*" p. 24.

82. See Natali Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands Indies, 1900–1942* (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, 1999), p. 89.

83. See Hasan, "*Laskar Jihad,*" pp. 41–53.

84. See Carl Brown, *Religion and State: The Muslim Approach to Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 60.

85. Interview with Jafar Umar Thalib, July 30, 2001.

86. Hasan, "*Laskar Jihad,*" pp. v–vi.

87. Cf. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Moataz A. Fattah, *Democratic Values in the Muslim World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2006).

88. But see Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, "The True Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Policy,* March/April 2003, pp. 62–70.

89. A forceful statement to this effect is Abdullahi Ahmed An'Na'im, *Toward an Islamic Reformation: Civil Liberties, Human Rights, and International Law* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990).

90. See, for example, Sami Zubaida, *Law and Power in the Islamic World* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), p. 11.

91. Clifford Geertz, "The Javanese Kijaji: The Changing Role of a Cultural Broker," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2, no. 2 (January 1960): 228–29.

92. Ibid., p. 249.

93. See Azyumardi, Afrianty, and Hefner, "Pesantren and Madrasa," pp. 188–91.

94. Dhofier, Pesantren *Tradition,* p. xxx. Cf. Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad,* pp. 6–9.

95. See Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam,* p. 99; and Janine A. Clark, *Islam, Charity, and Activism: Middle-Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

3 REFORMING ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA
DOCTRINE OR DIALOGUE?

RICHARD G. KRAINCE

In June 2001, more than three months before the September 11 attacks on the United States, Malaysian police began warning citizens of a "*jihad*-based militant outfit" that they claimed was responsible for a string of violent crimes in Malaysia.[1] The capture of four men during a failed bank heist outside the nation's capital of Kuala Lumpur the previous month led investigators to a cache of illegal weapons that included hand grenades, an M-16 assault rifle, ammunition, and chemicals assumed to be for making bombs. With information from those apprehended, detective units began to identify a widening circle of suspects believed to be involved in a series of related crimes including armed robberies, an attack on a police outpost near the Thai border, and even the assassination of an assemblyman from the state of Kedah the previous year.

The fact that the foiled bank robbery suspects were all recent graduates of Islamic studies programs at universities in Pakistan and the Middle East sparked concern among the country's top leadership

over the spread of religious extremism domestically.[2] Moreover, as a number of teachers and former students from Malaysia's independent Islamic school sector were accused of involvement in related incidents and detained, key government figures began to press for changes in national policy on Islamic education.

At a news conference on June 7, 2001, Inspector General of Police Tan Sri Norian Mai described the threat in terms of national security. He asserted that the perpetrators of the recent crimes belonged to an organization that was planning to wage a holy war in Malaysia in order to transform the country into an Islamic state. He explained that the group was an indigenous organization, although it was linked to an international network of militants. Its members had traveled to places such as Afghanistan and the Maluku islands in Indonesia in order to participate in jihad, which they clearly interpreted as a violent struggle. Inspector Norian claimed that the individuals involved had returned to Malaysia with a willingness to carry out criminal activities in the name of jihad and were attempting to spread extremist ideologies propagated by foreign terrorist groups.[3]

Government supporters responded to these warnings by calling for a comprehensive review of the Islamic education curriculum at all grade levels in order to address any "misunderstanding among Malaysian Muslims" regarding controversial Islamic concepts such as *jihad, shahid* (martyrdom), *ta'sub* (loyalty to a leader), *takfir* (excommunication), and *hudud* (Islamic laws interpreted by some to mandate severe corporal punishments for activities such as theft, alcohol consumption, illicit sexual behavior, and apostasy).[4] Members of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the leading political party within the National Front (Barisan Nasional) coalition that has governed Malaysia since independence in 1957, pressed for immediate action at their annual general assembly in late June 2001. Party officials there approved a motion urging the government to transform Malaysia's independent Islamic school sector, known as the People's Religious Schools (Sekolah Agama Rakyat or SAR), by turning it into a "government-assisted" system, with the Ministry of Education responsible for ensuring standards in teacher training, student assessment, the provision of basic amenities, and the implementation of the national curriculum in all Islamic schools.

Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's prime minister from 1981 to 2003, himself led calls against the independent Islamic schools. As president of UMNO, Mahathir made no secret of the political dynamics affecting the issue. In a speech at the UMNO general assembly meeting on June 21, 2001, he criticized linkages between numerous Islamic schools and the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (Parti Islam Se-Malaysia or PAS), the most formidable political opposition party vying with UMNO for the Malay vote. PAS had made considerable gains against UMNO in the 1999 general elections and the two parties were then locked in heated political conflict.

Mahathir described the teachings in PAS schools as "anti-government politics, mixed with various '*hadiths*' and 'injunctions' which have been interpreted according to the political interest of the party."[5] He accused PAS members of disparaging forms of education other than Islamic studies and of obstructing government efforts to modernize the country by labeling secular studies as "un-Islamic." He asserted:

> When it is explained that other forms of knowledge are just as important in Islam and in fact compulsory to acquire, this fact ensures the safety and security of the Muslim umma, freeing them of suppression from Islam's enemies and [is in fact] demanded by Islam as stated in surah Al-Ghaasyiyah verse 17 to 20, which means . . . we can learn a lesson by observing how something is created. . . . PAS and its supporters still accuse those who refer to this verse as secular and [of placing] importance on this world's affairs and not the hereafter.[6]

The controversy over the independent Islamic schools deepened in early August 2001 after police arrested ten people for alleged involvement in a previously unknown militant group called the Malaysian Mujahidin Organization (Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia or KMM). The organization was identified by government sources as the group responsible for the recent spate of violence. Members were said to have been trained in guerilla tactics in Afghanistan and were prepared for mountain warfare.[7] In a series of raids over the weekend of August 4, police arrested several PAS youth leaders, graduates of Islamic schools affiliated with PAS, and two Islamic schoolteachers,

including Nik Adli Nik Abdul Aziz, the son of PAS spiritual leader Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat.

Nik Aziz (the father) was—and is—the chief minister of the Malaysian state of Kelantan as well as the head of PAS's Ulama Council, the party's highest authority. Nik Adli (the son) was a teacher at the Darul Anuar Islamic Secondary School, a school administered by the Kelantan state government through the Kelantan Islamic Foundation. Nik Adli was accused of being a leader of the KMM and was detained along with several of his colleagues under Malaysia's controversial Internal Security Act (ISA). The reason for the arrests was described as involvement in KMM activities that were "detrimental to national security."[8] He would be held by the Malaysian government for more than five years without trial or charge before his release in October 2006.[9]

PAS fiercely criticized the arrests in its *Harakah* newspaper, whose editorial board reportedly claimed that the actions were conducted to please the United States.[10] Nik Aziz focused his response on the government's ISA policy, saying that it discredited the country because it did not allow criticism of the nation's leadership. He admitted that his son had been to Afghanistan; however, he denied that Nik Adli served as a KMM leader and demanded that the government prove the allegations in court rather than holding suspects without formal charges.[11]

Within days of Nik Adli's arrest, Malaysian investigators began to take notice of events in other parts of Southeast Asia that shed light on the activities of transnational jihadi groups. In Indonesia, authorities were piecing together clues from a series of mysterious bombings in July and early August 2001. It was soon discovered that an individual injured in one of these bombings was a twenty-six-year-old Malaysian man named Taufik Abdul Halim, who lost a leg after the bomb he was carrying exploded prematurely in the Atrium Senen shopping mall in Jakarta. Taufik became the prime suspect in the Atrium blast and was also suspected of involvement in other crimes in Indonesia. As interrogators questioned him about his activities, they learned that he was the younger brother of another Malaysian man named Zulkifli bin Abdul Hir, who had been a sniper with the Taliban in Khandahar, Afghanistan. Zulkifli would later become one of the primary suspects in the assassination of Joe Fernandez, the Malaysian assemblyman

from the state of Kedah who was gunned down in Penang the previous year.[12] In March 2007 he would also be added to the U.S. government's list of most wanted terrorists on suspicion of complicity in bombings in the Philippines.[13]

By the time the September 11 attacks occurred in the United States, Malaysia was already quite far along in terms of developing policies to address the threat of international terror. National leaders from Malaysia and Indonesia had met in late August to discuss ways to share intelligence on terrorist activity.[14] Investigators working collaboratively had pieced together evidence linking a number of Malaysians to terrorist attacks in Indonesia, including the Christmas 2000 church bombings that killed nineteen people and injured dozens in nine cities.[15] They had also identified a suspect believed to be responsible for planning the attacks, an Indonesian man named Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, who was married to a Malaysian woman.

Although Hamabali would remain at large for two more years, preliminary investigations into his activities led Malaysian detectives to a loose association of militants in Johor, Malaysia, in late 2001. It happened to be in Johor that two Indonesian clerics, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar, had earlier set up an extremist Islamic school called Pesantren Luqmanul Hakiem after fleeing from Indonesian authorities in 1985. The pair delivered fiery sermons calling for jihad against the secular governments of Southeast Asia. Evidence suggests that they advocated the use of violence in an effort to unite Southeast Asian Muslims within a single Islamic state to be comprised of Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and parts of Thailand and the Philippines.[16]

The embodiment of this idea was an organization referred to as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), which Ba'asyir was said to have led for several years after Sungkar's death in 1999. A number of young lecturers and professionals affiliated with the Malaysian Technology University (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia) in Johor allegedly became involved in JI activities through KMM, its Malaysian affiliate.[17] Several people from the university community were eventually arrested for suspected involvement in JI. Altogether, between May 2001 and June 2003, the Malaysian government detained at least eighteen alleged members of the KMM and fifty-eight members of the JI.[18]

Although controversy over the Malaysian government's Internal Security Act continued, growing recognition of the extent to which so many young Malaysians had become involved in extremist activities produced consensus within the ruling party on the need for action. Various government agencies responded to these concerns by launching studies assessing the country's Islamic education sector. Although several reports were eventually drafted, most were not made public, and the basic facts underlying the issue remained unclear. Moreover, understanding of the controversy was hindered by confusion in the media over basic issues such as what is meant by the term "Islamic school," how many exist, and what kind of changes to the Islamic school system were under consideration.

This chapter aims to explain some of the changes taking place in Malaysia's Islamic education sector and to describe the issues that have emerged as Islamic schooling has been transformed into a more formalized and quantitatively assessable enterprise. The chapter is based on firsthand interviews with educators and ministry officials in Malaysia during 2005 and 2006, as well as on analysis of Malaysian government documents and independent reports. In what follows, I provide an overview of the types of schools described in the literature on Islamic education in Malaysia; an examination of the categories used at present by the Malaysian government to classify Islamic schools; and an assessment of trends affecting the future of the Islamic education sector.

Several important trends are highlighted. First, as the vignette above is intended to illustrate, debates over Islamic education in Malaysia are deeply affected by domestic political concerns. Second, since the Malaysian government has withdrawn subsidies from the already ailing independent Islamic school sector, national schooling, not independent religious schools, has become the primary vehicle for the dissemination of Islamic teachings. Third, the government's insistence on standardizing the content of the Islamic studies curriculum has positioned public education as a major site of contestation over the interpretation of Islamic issues. Last, as new social movements have made inroads into Malaysian society, a cultural divide has widened between those voicing support for greater freedom of expression and individual rights, on one hand, and those committed to the promotion of public piety and ethnoreligious solidarity, on the other. To illustrate this point, the chapter provides an in-depth examination of how education

on women's rights and status in society has become one of the most controversial issues in need of review within Malaysia's public Islamic education curriculum.

ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The earliest form of Islamic education in the Malay Peninsula was Qur'anic instruction, conducted in mosques, prayer houses, and the homes of learned Muslims since the arrival of Islam in the region. Although this study is considered nonformal education today, Qur'anic instruction was the primary medium through which Malays attained basic literacy up until the establishment of the first formal schools on the Malay Peninsula in the early 1800s. Such instruction emphasized memorization of the Qur'an and the fundamentals of Islam. Students were not expected to master Arabic itself, though they learned to use written Arabic to recite the Qur'an. This practice provided a basis for literacy in Malay, which was written in Jawi, an adaptation of Arabic script.[19]

As Qur'anic schools gained popularity and the number of students increased, permanent, although often underfunded, schools known as *pondok* (lit. cottage) were established in villages throughout the region to provide additional training in the study of Islam for those who had already mastered the reading of the Qur'an (see Chap. 1, this volume). The pondok schools provided instruction in Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), interpretation of the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (*hadith*), Islamic jurisprudence and ritual practice (*fiqh*), and advanced study of mystical arts (*tasawwuf*).

While pondok schools were scattered throughout the Malay peninsula, the majority were located in the northern states of Kelantan and Kedah. Rich exchange occurred between pondok communities in these states as well as in Patani, the Malay sultanate just to the north in what is today southern Thailand. Awad Hang Salleh of the University of Malaya explained that two principles were widely embraced by pondok students.[20] First, students maintained simple eating habits and a modest lifestyle in order to free themselves from worldly concerns. Second, they sought to travel widely in order to advance their knowledge, a practice known as *merantau*. After studying in their home states, students from Kedah went to Kelantan; students from Kelantan and other parts of the country went to Kedah. Many then

moved on to Patani, which, as Liow also shows in his chapter in this volume, was considered one of the most important centers for Islamic studies in Southeast Asia.[21] A few would then go on to complete their education in Mecca.

After World War I, pondok schooling in Malaysia declined significantly as a result of several forces. First, modern education provided by the British offered great opportunities for economic advancement not provided in the pondok schools. Second, since the ability to speak English well was a prerequisite for sustained interaction with the colonial administration, formal schooling in English-medium schools, or at least the opportunity to study English in Malay-based schools, was a necessity for Malay advancement. Third, the establishment of the state religious offices under the sultans' bureaucracies resulted in the gradual takeover of the management of *zakat,* or Islamic alms. Since local religious leaders had previously funneled *zakat* to local institutions, the pondok lost a considerable source of funding as a result of this administrative change.[22]

Another important factor contributing to the decline of the pondok in Malaysia relates to the internal dynamics of Islam as it evolved in the Malay Peninsula. As a result of the penetration of modernist Islamic thought in the region, the pondok, in Rosnani's words "mostly disappeared" after World War I even though its contribution to the intellectual development of the Malays was a pivotal step toward the introduction of both rational thought and systematic education.[23]

A reformist and broadly "modernist" Islam spread on the Malay Peninsula, on the heels of expanding opportunities for travel between Southeast Asia and the Middle East with the steady rise in rubber prices during the 1920s.[24] During this period, scores of younger religious students returned from advanced study in Mecca, Medina, and Cairo bringing a new sense of urgency regarding the need to strengthen Islamic institutions by formalizing religious instruction. The traditional pondok soon found itself in competition with an increasing number of madrasa, or modernist Islamic day schools, which mixed some general education components with religious training. Madrasa also tended to preach a variety of Islam that was more deeply influenced by scholars involved in the modernist Islamic reform movement, or *islah* as it was generally called in Malaysia.

As the Christian orientation of British schooling was unacceptable to many Malays, the madrasa met an important need by offering a sophisticated form of schooling that focused on religion while also incorporating general studies. Until the 1950s, the number of madrasa grew steadily in rural areas of the peninsula. In that decade, however, Malay educators of diverse cultural and ideological persuasions began to talk about the need for a truly national Malaysian education system to prepare the Malay population for independence.[25]

By this time, two types of madrasa had emerged: those run by religious councils under the management of the various state administrations headed by the sultans, and those managed by independent organizations such as mosque groups, community *wakaf* (pious endowment) boards, Islamic organizations, or even political parties. This division has continued to the present, as has government analysts' tendency to view religious schools of the latter sort with concern.

In 1956, the High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya appointed a committee to examine the "Non-Government Islamic Religious schools." After visiting 76 of the 368 Islamic schools operating at the time, the committee concluded that many of the schools suffered from poor facilities, unsatisfactory administration, inadequate finances, and a paucity of resources beyond religious texts published in Arabic-speaking countries. The committee also determined, however, that in spite of these substandard conditions, the Islamic schools made two valuable contributions to society. First, they provided education for those children who for whatever reason were unable to attend general schools. Second, they provided Islamic education for students who did not receive adequate training in general studies schools. For these reasons, the commission recommended that the schools be subsidized in the future by the independent government so that they might develop, broaden their educational offerings, and contribute to the development of the young nation.[26]

By virtue of their stronger networking skills and keen interest in organized education, madrasa leaders were generally more adept at obtaining government subsidies than were the private families and organizations who ran pondok schools. As a result, numerous madrasa expanded in the first decade after independence while the pondok

as an institution further deteriorated. However, in the late 1960s, as Islamic studies offerings expanded dramatically in the public schools in line with the development of the National Education Policy, both madrasa and the few remaining pondok schools suffered serious declines in student enrollment. Moreover, the need for Islamic studies teachers in the public schools resulted in a severe shortage of teachers available for work in other institutions.[27] By the 1970s, as academic standards decreased within the independent Islamic schools, it was clear that the fortunes of the subsector as a whole were waning. At the same time, the government was steadily expanding its role in the provision of formal Islamic education through the national school system.

EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA

Any attempt to catalog Malaysian schools reveals the nation's rich ethnic diversity. According to its Department of Statistics, Malaysia's population of 25.5 million is composed of approximately 50.4 percent indigenous Malays, 23.7 percent Chinese, 11.0 percent other indigenous groups, 7.1 percent Indian, 6.6 percent non-Malaysian citizens, and 1.2 percent other nonindigenous ethnic groups. Islam is the religion of 60.4 percent of the population, including virtually the entire Malay community and portions of other ethnic groups. Some 19.2 percent of the population identify themselves as Buddhist, 9.1 percent as Christian, 6.3 percent as Hindu, and 2.6 percent as Confucianist. Some 0.8 percent is considered Animist.[28]

Primary schooling is available in Malay, the national language, as well as in Mandarin Chinese and Tamil, which are considered vernacular languages (see Table 3.1). More than 75 percent of Malaysia's 7,562 government or government-assisted primary schools are termed National Schools (Sekolah Kebangsaan or SK), with instruction in Malay provided for approximately 76 percent of the country's 3,120,866 primary school students. Approximately 17 percent of the nation's primary schools are Chinese schools serving 21 percent of primary students, while 7 percent are Tamil schools serving 3 percent of primary students. Those attending Chinese or Tamil National Type Primary Schools (Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan—Cina or Tamil) are required to pass a Malay language proficiency test before joining other national school students in the upper grades.[29]

Table 3.1. Government Primary Schools—Student Enrollment / Number of Schools: National (Malay), Chinese, Tamil, Total

Year	*National (Malay)*	*Chinese*	*Tamil*	*Totals*
1979[a]	1,068,509/ 2765	502,995/ 988	77,013/ 589	1,648,517/ 4,342
1989[b]	1,716,483/ 4,958	582,194/ 1,290	92,243/ 547	2,390,920/ 6,795
1994[c]	2,075,279/ 5,078	580,456/ 1,289	103,963/ 539	2,762,166/ 6,932
2004[d]	2,375,093/ 5,723	647,784/ 1,286	96,129/ 525	3,120,886/ 7,562

[a] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Pelajaran, *Educational Statistics of Malaysia, 1976–1979* (Kuala Lumpur: Educational Planning and Research Division, Malaysian Ministry of Education, 1982).
[b] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Pelajaran, *Educational Statistics of Malaysia, 1989* (Kuala Lumpur: Educational Planning and Research Division, Malaysian Ministry of Education, 1989).
[c] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Pelajaran, *Educational Statistics of Malaysia, 1994* (Kuala Lumpur: Educational Planning and Research Division, Malaysian Ministry of Education, 1994).
[d] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, *Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia 2004,* pp. 134–35.

Malaysia's National Secondary Schools (Sekolah Menengah Kebangasaan) serve 2,023,888 students in 1,976 schools. Until recently, the language of instruction had been exclusively Malay in accordance with the National Language Bill of 1967. However, in an effort to improve the country's international competitiveness in technical fields, in 2004 the government passed legislation requiring all science and mathematics courses to be conducted in English.

Since independence in 1957, Malaysian educational leaders have prioritized two objectives: socioeconomic development and national integration.[30] Malaysia's economic achievements are well known. Its average annual growth rate was 4.2 percent between 1970 and 1990 in

terms of real GNP per capita, placing it tenth among 126 nations with populations of one million or more.[31] The Malaysian economy grew much more quickly in the 1990s before the Asian currency crisis took hold in 1997. Recent data suggest that the nation is again experiencing a high level of growth, with the economy expanding by 7.1 percent in 2004 in terms of real GNP per capita.[32] Consequently, Malaysians as a whole enjoy a level of human development that is the highest in Southeast Asia, with the exception of the city-state of Singapore and the tiny, oil-rich kingdom of Brunei.

Investment in education has clearly been a priority for Malaysian policymakers. The government has spent an average of 20 percent of the national budget on education over the last decade.[33] In 2004, 21.28 percent of federal expenditures went to education with a total outlay of nearly $6.3 billion. The figure represents 6.26 percent of the nation's GNP, which is well ahead of many developed countries.[34] The government has also made significant progress in providing universal access to schooling through the secondary level and has paid close attention to the needs of employers as it has expanded educational opportunities. As a result, Malaysia has been able to boast a competitive workforce that has helped it attract a diverse base of industries.

Malaysian education policy is also distinguished by efforts to redress economic imbalances among certain ethnic groups. The national education system has employed affirmative action policies that encourage the advancement of the indigenous, yet previously marginalized Malay community in a long-term bid to promote social stability. Accordingly, the income gap between Malaysia's Chinese and Malay populations declined from 2.3 in 1970 to 1.7 in 1990.[35]

Notwithstanding its achievements in economic growth, living standards, and access to education, Malaysia's success with regard to national integration has been mixed. Serious deficiencies in educational infrastructure remain concentrated in the states of Sabah and Sarawak, where non-Malay indigenous groups predominate. Pockets of poverty also persist in peninsular Malaysia, reflecting a growing gap between rich and poor. Moreover, the education sector has failed to address adequately the marginalization of the country's ethnic Tamil minority. The boisterous Tamil-led protests of late 2007 and subsequent government legal action against dozens of Tamil activists reveal growing ethnic tensions.

Religious tensions have also intensified recently as many young people have begun to chafe under the restrictions and social conformity urged by piety-oriented Muslim organizations. Two decades ago, Chandra Muzaffar noted a widespread "desire to conform" as he observed people's tendency to "herd together" within the context of Islamic resurgence.[36] Though Islamic revival movements continue to exert powerful influence, several contemporary observers of Malaysian society have begun to track the growing importance of new, rights-based social movements seeking greater freedom of expression.[37] There are early signs of cross-fertilization and a development of mutual understanding among Islamic revivalists and the supporters of such groups.[38] It remains unclear, however, whether increased levels of activism in general will result in social polarization or a greater spirit of concord among civil society groups.

The right to practice one's faith is enshrined in the Malaysian constitution, as is the freedom of the country's ethnic groups to express their identity. However, the nation's goal of creating a truly integrated school system in which harmonious relations are cemented among Malaysians of all ethnic and religious backgrounds remains unfulfilled. The following overview of Malaysia's Islamic education sector and analysis of recent trends is intended to broaden understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing policymakers in the context of ongoing educational and social reforms.

TYPES OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

Current literature on Islamic education in Malaysia recognizes five types of Islamic schools, reflecting the formal categories used by the Malaysian government for distinguishing schools. Listed in order of relative distance from federal government control, the types are: (1) the people's religious schools (*sekolah agama rakyat*), which are managed by individuals, communities, independent Islamic foundations, or other nongovernmental organizations; (2) the state Islamic schools (*sekolah agama negeri*), which are administered through state-level bureaucracies as opposed to the federal government; (3) private Islamic schools (*sekolah agama swasta*), which by definition follow the national curriculum even though they are operated by private groups; (4) the national Islamic schools (*sekolah agama kebangsaan*), which are run by the national government; and (5) the national schools (*sekolah*

kebangasaan) themselves, which the government claims provide the highest quality Islamic education. In what follows I shall describe the first four groupings. I discuss Islamic education within the national schools in a subsequent section.

The People's Religious Schools (Sekolah Agama Rakyat or SARs)

The diverse group of schools referred to as the People's Religious Schools (SARs) reflects Malaysia's long tradition of independent Islamic education. The term refers to self-supporting Islamic institutions that offer full-time training in various traditions of Islamic knowledge. In 2004, the Ministry of Education identified 188 schools with a total enrollment of 36,856 pupils in this category.[39]

The SAR schools tend to be small, averaging fewer than two hundred students per institution. Muh Syukri Salleh and Nailul Murad Mohd Nor explained that the category of People's Religious Schools is highly diverse because it is composed of institutions that have been founded by individuals, communities, or small organizations operating in distinct local contexts. Some of the institutions are former pondok that evolved into formal schools.[40] Others are madrasa that have long-established affiliations with various independent Islamic associations either within Malaysia or overseas.

The people's religious schools are distinct from other Islamic schools in that they have generally not followed the national curriculum or any other formal Islamic studies curricula made available through government agencies such as the Department for the Advancement of Islam (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia or JAKIM). Although prior to 2002 most independent Islamic schools received funding from the government through various programs, schools in this category, by definition, have maintained their autonomy over educational issues and have tended to resist state and national government controls.

Government sources claimed that as many as two-thirds of Malaysia's independent Islamic schools were affiliated with PAS, either directly through their administrative structures or loosely with respect to their political leanings.[41] In 2002, the Malaysian government restricted all forms of government funding to the sector pending a thorough review of their operations. As is described in detail in the next section, the impact of these measures upon the subsector was to be momentous.

The State Islamic Schools (Sekolah Agama Negeri or SANs)

State-administered Islamic schools are found in eleven of Malaysia's thirteen states. They are administered by the state (provincial) governments under the aegis of the sultans, usually through State Islamic Councils (Majlis Agama Negeri) or State Islamic Religious Departments (Jabatan Agama Islam). In 2004, there were 120 state Islamic schools listed by Malaysia's Ministry of Education serving 60,053 students nationwide.[42] The figures represent little change in the subsector since 1999 when 112 state Islamic schools and approximately 62,000 students were reported.[43] The highest number of schools in any one province is 22 in Selangor. In contrast, Penang and Sarawak have none.

Although there are differences between states, the state Islamic schools are considered to be on par with the national Islamic schools in terms of basic facilities, equipment, and financing.[44] The curriculum implemented by the schools is normally the same as that taught in the National Islamic Schools. Students are prepared to take the government's standardized examinations for general studies as well as for religion. Successful graduates can earn a government diploma in general studies and religious studies. A fair number of State Islamic Schools also prepare students for entrance into various Islamic university systems in the Middle East. Most commonly, students choosing this track follow the Maahad Al-Azhar Lil Buuth Al-Islamiyyah curriculum, which prepares students for advanced study at al-Azhar University in Cairo.[45]

Some states have set up foundations to manage the administration of the subsector. For example, Kelantan's eighteen State Islamic Schools are administered by the Kelantan Islam Foundation, which was set up by the family of the Sultan of Kelantan. The Kelantan system is the largest of all state systems with 17,220 students enrolled. It also boasts several innovative Islamic education projects, including the Modern Pondok Center in Kandis, Bachok, and the Arabic Language Center in Nilam Puri, which are intended as model educational facilities. The Kelantan Islamic Affairs Department (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Kelantan or JAHEIK), within the state government also conducts teacher training, curricular development, and various forms of school enrichment programs for the system.[46]

Private Islamic Schools (Sekolah Agama Swasta or SASs)

The private Islamic schools, by definition, are those schools that are run by individuals or private organizations but implement the national curriculum in both general and Islamic studies. The government has promoted the growth of these schools as it has other private enterprises. It demands adherence to national standards, yet it encourages individuals and private groups to undergo a certification process so that they may collaborate with the Ministry of Education in delivering quality Islamic studies programs.

The SAS schools are generally well funded and employ highly trained professional staff. Administrators tend to adhere to a corporate management model and strive to advance achievement on standardized tests. These schools are highly selective in terms of student admissions. Students are prepared to take college entrance exams and high numbers of them go on to university study.

As of 2004 (see Table 3.2), there were only 21 private religious primary schools and 15 private religious secondary schools in the country. This is in contrast to the 7,562 elementary schools and 1,976 secondary schools in the government or government-assisted category. Private Islamic schools serve 4,155 elementary school students and 4,079 secondary school students, representing just 0.16 percent of the

Table 3.2. Private Primary and Secondary Schools—Student Enrollment / Number of Private Schools: Islamic, Chinese, and General Private Schools, 2004

	Islamic	*Chinese*	*General*
Primary Students	4,155	—	13,244
Primary Schools	21	—	63
Secondary Students	4,079	50,280	13,965
Secondary Schools	15	60	75

nation's more than five million school students.[47] Seen in comparison with other types of private education, it is interesting to note that at present there are four times as many private Chinese high schools as private Islamic high schools in Malaysia, with twelve times as many students attending private Chinese high schools.

National Islamic Secondary Schools (Sekolah Kebangsaan Menengah Agama or SKMAs)

Since the late 1970s, Malaysia's federal government has operated a growing number of National Islamic Secondary Schools. In 2004, the Ministry of Education identified fifty-five schools in this category. Enrollment within this sector at the secondary level was only 38,546 out of a total of 2,016,667 secondary students, or just 1.9 percent. However, students within this subsector are free to choose academic tracks other than Islamic studies, and only about 13 percent of SKMA students are actually focusing their studies on religion.

Students are prepared to sit for national exams leading to higher education either in general or Islamic studies (see Table 3.3). The Islamic studies exams mirror the general studies exams in terms of their timing. The Lower Certificate in Religion (Sijil Renda Agama or SRA) is awarded upon completion of primary religious school. The Secondary Certificate (Sijil Menengah Agama or SMA) is awarded upon completion of secondary school, and the Higher Certificate in Religion (Sijil Tinggi Agama or STA) is awarded upon completion of finishing school. Students can also take exams to gain entrance to various higher education systems in the Middle East.

Table 3.3. Government and Government-Assisted Secondary Schools, Teachers, and Students: Total National Secondary School and Islamic Secondary Schools (SKMA)[a]

	Number of Schools		*Number of Teachers*		*Number of Students*	
Year	**Total**	**Islamic**	**Total**	**Islamic**	**Total**	**Islamic**
1979[b]	798	13	36,507	181	923,653	3,527
1989	1,288	27	66,937	463	1,352,925	15,675

Table 3.3. (Continued)

	Number of Schools		*Number of Teachers*		*Number of Students*	
Year	**Total**	**Islamic**	**Total**	**Islamic**	**Total**	**Islamic**
1994	1,437	41	86,052	1,708	1,566,973	21,812
2004[c]	1,976	55	132,298	3,085	2,156,215 (4,156)[d]	38,546 (2,890)[d]

[a] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, *Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia 2004* (Kuala Lumpur: Educational Planning and Research Division, Malaysian Ministry of Education, 2004).

[b] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Pelajaran, *Educational Statistics of Malaysia, 1976–1979* (Kuala Lumpur: Educational Planning and Research Division, Malaysian Ministry of Education, 1982).

[c] Malaysia Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, *Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia, 1979* (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Ministry of Education, 1979), pp. 134–35; N.B.: 1979 data represent Peninsular Malaysia only.

[d] Items in parentheses represent numbers of students majoring in Islamic studies within these institutions.

The number of the SKMA schools has doubled over the past fifteen years as a result of direct government encouragement and interest by students and their parents. Thus, while those concentrating on Islamic studies within the subsector represent only a tiny portion of all secondary school students (0.5 percent), the consistent growth of the sector since 1979 suggests that there has been no erosion of the niche market for quality Islamic education. Rather, National Islamic Schools are being promoted by the government as ideal environments for modern Islamic education because of their students' high achievement scores in general studies as well as in Islamic studies subjects. A number of private Islamic schools, such as the Al-Irsyad Academy in Penang, have developed national reputations by consistently producing graduates with an impressive number of A rankings on standardized tests.

RECENT ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

In its April 2003 Survey on Malaysia, *The Economist* erroneously claimed that around 700,000 young Malays were estimated to be attending Islamic schools in the country.[48] The figure is in line with data

published by *The New Straits Times* claiming that 658,750 pupils were enrolled in Malaysia's Islamic schools in 1995.[49] However, a close look at Islamic schools reveals that these reports grossly overestimated the numbers of students in Islamic schools. Indeed, the sector has declined significantly in recent years.

As seen in Table 3.4, in 2004 only 113,221 individuals were enrolled in the various types of Islamic schools. When the number of National Islamic School students *not* majoring in Islamic studies is taken into account, however, the total concentrating on Islamic studies dwindles to only 77,565—out of a total student population of more than five million. In short, only 1.5 percent of Malaysian students are engaged in Islamic studies in a manner that approaches full-time study. Of these, more than half are studying in some form of government school or are enrolled in private institutions that follow the government curriculum.

Table 3.4. Enrollment in All Types of Islamic Schools, 2004: Number of Schools, Teachers, and Students[a]

Type of Islamic School	*Number of Schools*	*Number of Teachers*	*Number of Students*
People's (Independent) (SAR)	188	2,964	36,856
State Government (SAN)	120	3,994	60,053
Private (Government Curriculum) (SAS)	36	583 (estimated)	8,234
National Government (SKMA)	55	3,085	38,546 (2,890 majors)
Totals: Islamic Schools	441	11,146	113,221
Totals: Non-Islamic National Schools	9,483	311,098	5,238,555

[a] Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, *Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia 2004* (Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Ministry of Education, 2004), pp. 134–35.

The remaining 36,856 students, representing just 0.7 percent of the total student population, were identified by the Ministry of Education in 2004 as enrolled in the People's Religious Schools.[50] This figure reflects a 44 percent decrease in the number of students since 2002, when 66,375 were recorded in the subsector. The decrease is even more dramatic when compared with pre-2002 data, which was cited by the former minister of education to be 74,000. If this is taken into account, it appears that in just three years the People's Religious Schools suffered a reduction in student enrollment of a full 50 percent. The number of schools also decreased during this period from 225 to 188. Moreover, nearly 1,900 teachers moved into government service or left the sector entirely between 2001 and 2004.[51]

As the independent Islamic education sector has declined, Islamic education within the national schools has increased significantly. While only about 0.5 percent of students at national secondary schools chose to focus on Islamic studies in 2004, all Muslim students are required to take religious studies courses throughout their schooling.[52] National schools operate within the framework of national education policies that require a minimum of five hours per week of religious and moral instruction. Muslim students are required to complete course work in Islam while non-Muslim students are required to take moral education courses.

QUALITY VERSUS INDEPENDENCE

It is clear that the decline of the People's Religious Schools (SARs) is a direct result of the Malaysian government's commitment to expanding opportunities for Islamic education within the national schools as well as its determination to eradicate what it regarded as an educational subsector devoted to propagating antigovernment sentiment. As described above, as early as June 2001 fears of Islamic extremism prompted government supporters to call for stern measures against schools linked to the opposition Islamist party PAS. It was not until October of 2002 however, that the government followed through with its warnings and announced that it would discontinue all assistance to the People's Religious Schools until an assessment could be conducted to determine which schools were engaged in antigovernment activities.[53] Then in December 2002, although a review of the subsector had not been completed, the

government announced that measures would be taken to absorb all SAR students into the national school system in order to ensure that they received a quality education.[54]

In January 2003, Prime Minister Mahathir explained the decision by asserting that, "Those who are educated at SAR will grow up hating everything, including the Government. They cannot work and are not qualified to do anything else."[55] Mahathir was insinuating not only that the schools were involved in inappropriate political activity, but that the educational quality of the independent Islamic schools was so poor that graduates were destined to become economically marginalized, leaving them few options but to blame the government for their plight. This issue of educational quality—based primarily on achievement on standardized tests—would become the government's central argument for the closure of the subsector.

The case against the SARs was laid out by former Minister of Education Tan Sri Musa Mohamad during a speech in front of Malaysia's Parliamentary House of Representatives (Dewan Rakyat) on March 17, 2003.[56] Focusing on relative educational quality, the Minister argued that even though the government had poured a significant amount of money into the SARs, their prestige had remained low because of consistently poor achievement scores on standardized tests. The minister offered the following statistics as evidence: in the 2002 Lower Secondary Examination (PMR), only 0.2 percent of People's Religious School students received a grade of A, while 15.9 percent of National Islamic School students earned A grades. The National School and State Islamic School students earned 3.0 percent and 3.8 percent, respectively.

In Islamic education, a subject area in which religious studies students are expected to excel, only 10.1 percent of People's Religious School students received an A, as opposed to 18.9 percent of National School students, 35.8 percent of State Religious school students, and 68.8 percent of National Religious School students. In mathematics, only 3.5 percent of students received a grade of A, while 21.0 percent of National School students, 35.8 percent of State Religious School students, and 68.8 percent of National Religious school students did so.[57]

In regard to the overall Lower Secondary Assessment test, only 35 percent of the People's Religious School students passed with a D

or better, while 62.7 percent of National School students, 72.6 percent of State Islamic School students, and 92.9 percent of National Religious School students passed. In regard to the Malaysia Certificate of Education (SPM) examinations taken after course work in the upper secondary school is complete, the SAR schools were again left behind in all areas except Islamic thought (*tassawur*). However, in the general Islamic Education section, 11 percent of SAR students passed with an A in comparison with 18.2 percent of students in the National Schools, 33.8 percent in State Islamic schools, and 88.2 percent of students in the National Religious Schools. In the study of the Qur'an and the Sunah, 10.9 percent of SAR students received an A, while 18.2 percent of National School students, 18.5 percent of State Religious School students, and 50.4 percent of National Islamic School students received a grade of A. In Arabic language, only 3.2 percent of SAR students received an A.[58]

In the area of teacher education, marks were also low. Nationally, upwards of 90 percent of SAR teachers were deemed unqualified to teach the subjects they taught because they did not have appropriate training: 73.2 percent did not have a teaching diploma, while 26.5 percent had not even graduated from high school.[59]

While the Ministry of Education began to tabulate and publicize these startling figures, reports also came in from the state level. The State Islamic Religious and Education Committee chairman of Perak, Abdul Malek Hanafiah, reported in April 2003 that only 2 percent of the thirty-six People's Religious Secondary School headmasters in Perak had professional teaching qualifications. Only 25 percent had degrees of any kind. Out of the ten full-time headmasters at the primary level, only two had such qualifications. Regarding the subsector's teaching staff in Perak, he reported that only 25 of the 704 teachers had professional teaching certificates at the secondary level even though 164 were university graduates. Of the 180 primary school teachers, only 22 had university degrees, while 22 others had teaching certificates and 33 had earned a high school diploma.[60]

Although during much of 2003 PAS supporters mounted an aggressive "Save the SAR" campaign, the government pushed forward to implement its policies. While government officials starved the independent Islamic subsector of funds, they also offered jobs within the government education system to all SAR teachers willing to leave

their posts. Unqualified teachers were also offered diploma courses so that they could enter the civil service system at a higher rank.[61]

By the time UMNO's annual General Assembly was held in June 2003, delegates were describing the takeover as a public relations success. Party officials proclaimed that the SAR controversy had actually made the Malaysian people more aware of the government's role in providing Islamic education within the public schools as well as of its earlier efforts to strengthen the independent Islamic schools' subsector.[62] The Ministry of Education subsequently announced in 2004 that all Muslim students would be required to study both Arabic and Jawi at the primary level in order to better understand Islamic teachings.

While the crackdown on independent Islamic schools will likely be remembered as one of former president Mahathir's controversial achievements, the advancement of Islamic education in the national schools will probably be associated with current prime minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Since taking office in October 2003, Badawi has made education a cornerstone of his administration's domestic policy platform and advanced a high-profile campaign to educate citizens about the developmentalist role that he believes Islam can play in society. Known as Islam Hadhari, or "civilizational Islam," the campaign places a "very high premium on the ability of the government to provide educational opportunities and on the capability of the people to have access to education." Badawi has argued that knowledge is the key to elevating the poor from poverty, while science, technology, research, and development are critical in creating a modern developed country. He has thus insisted that the acquisition of knowledge is the way to "bridge the prosperity gap among nation states in a globalizing world" as well as the key to undermining support for Islamic radicalism.[63]

Ministry of Education officials with whom I spoke in April 2005 asserted that such efforts had been highly successful, in that all independent Islamic schools were now following the government curriculum and adhering to government educational standards. While this assertion could not be independently verified, review of the government's statistics and my field observations suggest that the People's Religious Schools have indeed experienced a dramatic contraction since 2002. A pattern reported in several other chapters in this book—the tendency of parents to seek educational opportunities for their children that will enable them to attain economic rewards

later in life—has been one of the most significant factors eroding confidence in the independent Islamic schools and strengthening the appeal of national schooling. As thousands of students have fled the Islamic subsector, it has become clear that many parents and students regard educational quality as it has been defined by the government as more important than school independence.

EDUCATION ON WOMEN'S STATUS AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

Although the Malaysian government has demonstrated its ability to prepare students to score well on standardized tests, it has done little to infuse Islamic education courses with its high ideals about "civilizational Islam." In fact, review of the government's Islamic education program reveals that parts of the national curriculum are difficult to distinguish from units taught in PAS's Islamist schools. In particular, the manner in which Malaysian youth are taught about women's rights and status in society reveals significant bias against women in spite of their increasing levels of achievement in academia and the workplace.

Several observers have commented recently on Malaysian women's "unsung revolution," which has succeeded in securing political space and driving a number of reform issues.[64] Statistics from the country's education sector do reveal significant progress. The Malaysian Ministry of Education reports that far more women are attending college than men. While rates of male and female enrollment in government and government-assisted schools are comparable through high school graduation, many more women pursue university degrees. Men still outnumber women in polytechnic institutes and throughout the tertiary education system within technical disciplines such as engineering. Overall, however, there are twice as many women as men at the undergraduate level in every major university in the country, including institutions that are strong in the sciences such as the University of Science in Penang. Twice as many women as men are also enrolled at the undergraduate level in Islamic colleges as well as in the prestigious International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur. The same is true in teacher-training colleges, where nearly twice as many women as men graduate. This trend appears likely to continue, as women outnumber men at the matriculation (college preparatory) level by almost two to one.[65]

The long-term impact of this trend is difficult to gauge. It is clear that Muslim women in Malaysia are accumulating intellectual capi-

tal, broadening their employment options, and attaining positions of leadership as never before. Nevertheless, there are still more male faculty members at universities and twice as many men as women in Ph.D. programs. Although women hold leadership positions within academia and elsewhere in Malaysian society, men nonetheless retain control over how women's role in society is taught in the schools.

Islamic education materials used in national schooling continue to promote parochial views that undermine women's public statuses while providing little context or intellectual analysis for a deeper understanding of the complexity of women's roles in society. Moreover, rather than presenting a diversity of opinions on women's issues, these materials present a unitary view of most issues, as if only one interpretation of Islamic teachings were acceptable.

Several examples of this can be found in Fauziyah Nordin's quasi-official study guide for the Malaysian Certificate of Education (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia) in Islamic Studies, an examination that is taken before graduation from secondary school. Fauziyah's guide is one of the most common study guides available in textbook stores. The chapter on *nusyuz* (a wife who betrays or disobeys her husband) illustrates the paradox that women face. According to the text, a woman considered a nusyuz is one who indulges in *maksiat* (hedonistic behavior), goes outside of her home without the permission of her husband, refuses to serve her husband in bed, or does other things that can be considered as disagreeing with or disobeying her husband.[66]

Although no Qur'anic justification is cited for any of the statements, Fauziyah asserts that a wife who has become a nusyuz incurs the wrath (*kemurkaan*) of Allah. She loses her right to shop for daily necessities or clothes, and also loses her right to demand that her husband be responsible for her. Furthermore, if a wife refuses to change her behavior, her husband "is compelled to beat her without injuring her." The guide specifies that the husband must not use any dangerous objects to beat her, hit sensitive areas, or be overly zealous in his abuse so that she is injured. Rather, he is instructed to hit her "in the manner of a policeman with the goal of teaching her."[67]

Students are required to learn these highly controversial interpretations of Islam without any consideration of opposing views. No Qur'anic scripture or other Islamic textual source is cited to support the interpretations. As a result, students are not provided with any

means to gauge their reliability. Instead, they are simply expected to accept and repeat these lessons so as to pass a standardized test.

In addition to promoting questionable views that are not explicitly supported by Qur'anic scripture, the study guide also exhibits bias against women by selectively omitting Qur'anic scripture that guarantees certain women's rights. This bias can be plainly observed in Fauziyah's chapter on *zinah* (adultery). He provides verses one to ten of the Qur'an's Surah An-Nur (The Light) in their entirety in Arabic in a text box, while including an italicized summary in Malay within quotation marks as if providing a direct translation. Adultery is defined here as sex between a woman and a man outside of legal marriage. Paralleling the scripture, two types of adultery are identified. The first is premarital sex, which is declared punishable by a hundred lashes for either man or woman. Extramarital sex is identified as an offense that incurs death by stoning. In both cases, the Qur'anic passages make it clear that four witnesses are required before an accusation of adultery is considered legitimate. Men are also discouraged from making false accusations, since a punishment of a hundred lashes and the rejection of future testimony is mandatory for those unable to produce four witnesses after making such a claim. Fauziyah then quotes verses six and seven in stating that, in the absence of four witnesses, a man may himself make four oaths to God to serve as his four witnesses if he is willing to utter a fifth oath invoking Allah's curse upon him if he is telling a lie.[68]

The problem here is that Fauziyah ends his translation of the Qur'anic passages after verse seven without covering verses eight and nine, which state that a woman may avert the punishment of being stoned to death if she responds to such an accusation by bearing witness four times by Allah that her husband is telling a lie (An-Nur 24:8) and by swearing that Allah's wrath should come upon her if her husband in fact is speaking the truth (An-Nur 24:9). Irrespective of one's interpretation of the verses or position on the need to contextualize Islamic law, Fauziyah's study guide is curiously biased in that it communicates men's rights on a particularly important issue while failing to communicate women's rights on the same issue in accordance with the Qur'an.

In the same chapter, students are instructed to identify several causes of adultery, including "free association" between men and women, lack of in-depth study of religious teachings, ignorance of

the dangers of contagious diseases, and "women wearing clothes that expose their *aurat,*" or parts of the body that should not be exposed according to conservative interpretations of Islamic law (those include the hair, ears, neck, arms, and legs). Here the behavior of women is cited as the ultimate cause of adultery, while no mention is made of any male behavior that might be considered a cause.

These few examples illustrate how the Malaysian government's Islamic education efforts impinge upon the rights of women and undermine their status in Malaysian society. For the vast majority of students whose formal training in Islamic studies will be limited to course work provided by the government schools, these course materials may have a significant impact on how women's issues are viewed. Considering the biased manner in which such teachings are presented, it is not surprising that women's issues have become a topic of great controversy in Malaysian society.

CONTESTATION OVER WOMEN'S RIGHTS

In recent years, there have been numerous incidents in which Islamist groups have sought to control women's behavior. In January 2005 the provincial-level Department of Islam in Malaysia's Federal Territories, known by its acronym JAWI (Jabatan Agama Islam Wilayah Persekutuan), sent its Enforcement and Proselytization Squad into a popular Kuala Lumpur nightclub to detain Muslims suspected of drinking alcohol and engaging in other allegedly immoral activities. Zouk, the targeted establishment, is an upscale dance club frequented by young professionals of all ethnic backgrounds. While non-Muslims were not detained in the raid, nearly a hundred Muslims were taken into custody. The incident was initially treated as something of a titillating scandal by Malaysian media due to the significant number of prominent families whose sons and daughters were detained. However, sober public outcry soon followed as those arrested in the raid began to explain how JAWI officers engaged in sexual harassment, employed excessive force, and grossly overstepped their department's mandate.

While the JAWI squad has conducted numerous smaller raids since its formation in 2002, the seriousness of the Zouk incident prompted Malaysian civil society groups to demand government action against the various quasi-formal organizations like JAWI aiming

to enforce religious practices, encourage neighbor surveillance, and impose their interpretation of Islam on others. As indignation over the incidents grew, a consortium of fifty-two Malaysian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) presented the government with a memorandum calling for the abolition of moral policing and the repeal of provisions in religious and municipal laws that deny citizens fundamental freedoms and rights.[69]

Sisters in Islam, an Islamic women's group, played a leading role in launching the movement to secure individual rights through the reform of Islamic law. In a series of opinion pieces, the group described how JAWI officers had violated the Federal Constitution by selectively targeting and humiliating women.[70] For example, during the Zouk raid, JAWI personnel forced female detainees to parade themselves in front of male officers so that they might better determine the nature of the women's offenses. Male detainees were not subjected to such scrutiny. Sisters in Islam pointed out that this situation reflected sexual discrimination trends already apparent from similar cases. For example, as is widely known in Malaysia, female beauty pageant contestants have been arrested for immodesty, while male bodybuilders are commonly allowed to display their scantily clad bodies without censure.

Zainah Anwar, executive director of Sisters in Islam, explained that these experiences with moral policing made it clear that "the moment religion is coerced, it breeds hypocrisy."[71] She argued that reforms of the Malaysian Syariah Criminal Offence Act and the Fundamental Liberties Act are necessary because it remains a crime for a Muslim to "defy, disobey or dispute a *fatwa* once it is gazetted." She pointed out that, in spite of the ruling, JAWI officials completely ignore certain fatwas while vigorously enforcing others. For example, the Selangor Fatwa Council's fatwa against cigarette smoking is never enforced, while raids of discotheques are conducted.

Anwar concluded that the concept of public morality is extremely difficult to define within Malaysia's multiethnic, multireligious, pluralistic, and democratic society. She asserted that "in a country where Islam is used as a source of law and public policy, religious authority can no longer claim monopoly over the interpretation and meaning of Islam." Rather, public debate is necessary to determine the extent to which Islamic teachings should be used to legislate public morality. She argued that, in situations where no public consensus can be

reached, the determination of norms of behavior should be left to the "religious conscience of the individual."[72]

These ideas were fiercely rejected by conservative thinkers within Malaysian society. For example, Baharuddeen Abu Bakar, a specialist in Islamic public law at the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur, dismissed the idea that Muslims should be allowed to decide right from wrong by themselves. He argued that the idea of personal sin is not recognized by Islam but is a feature of Western jurisprudence that Muslims should not consider. He urged the government to continue to take responsibility for "enjoining the good and forbidding evil" through moral policing and argued that the moral police should be "suitably empowered, resourced, provided with well-trained staff and protected from interference from all quarters" in conducting their work.[73]

Numerous organizations representing Malaysia's Islamic orthodoxy also took a stand against calls to reform Islamic law and disband the JAWI morals police. A consortium of some forty Islamic groups organized by the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or ABIM) responded with their own public memorandum in which they asked the government *not* to alter laws prohibiting vice (*maksiat*). They argued that problems with the implementation of vice-eradication efforts do not justify the elimination of efforts to guard against public immorality.[74]

Similarly, PAS condemned the idea of holding public debate on religious issues. Its spokespersons were adamant that debate over the issue of moral policing was impermissible because matters such as alcohol consumption, free mixing between the sexes, and other vices are clearly forbidden in the Qur'an and require a response from true believers—not the general population. Moreover, PAS leaders insisted that public opinion is largely irrelevant, since Muslim clerics alone, by virtue of their advanced knowledge, bear the responsibility for interpreting Islam.

Claims that clerics hold a monopoly on the interpretation of religion are increasingly difficult to defend in Malaysia, which like most modern societies is characterized by a diffusion of religious authority. As disputes have continued among Muslim clerics and members of the NGO community, among political factions, as well as among various academic personalities, it is clear that Islamic educators operate

within a social climate that is marked by a great diversity of opinion on religious issues. The reluctance of policymakers to acknowledge this diversity within the context of the Islamic education curriculum is one of the anachronisms that has yet to be addressed by the prime minister's civilizational Islam campaign.

CONCLUSION

Since the First World Conference on Islamic Education held in Mecca in 1977, Malaysian educational leaders have been at the forefront of efforts to modernize the role of Islamic educational institutions. Their concern to address educational dualism prompted sweeping reconsideration of the proper balance between religious and general education. While strengthening the teaching of Islam in public schools, they also demanded that Islamic schools broaden their general education. The result has been the development of a hybrid system with no clear distinction between general and religious education.

The Malaysian Ministry of Education faces numerous challenges in attempting to manage this hybrid system. Above all, it must determine how it will address controversial social and religious issues within the context of course work that introduces young people to Islamic thought. As a result of the government's determination to become the chief provider of Islamic education, nearly all Muslim students now study the basics of Islam from the same government-approved textbooks and demonstrate their mastery of Islamic teachings through the same standardized tests. Many educators have welcomed this development as an opportunity to bridge religious and secular worldviews. However, review of Islamic education texts reveals that state efforts are focused on promoting a particular interpretation of Islamic teachings rather than exposing students to the diversity of viewpoints that has long characterized Islamic studies.

In spite of rising controversy in Malaysian society over religious issues, Islamic thought continues to be presented in the national schools as if there were only one interpretation of Islamic teachings. As illustrated above, the selective manner in which gender dynamics, women's rights, and the role of women in society are framed in official Islamic education texts demonstrates neglect of the views of female theologians as well as a disregard for women's vital role in Malaysian society. As a matter of policy, ministry officials in charge of curricu-

lar materials consistently ignore alternative interpretations of Islamic teachings with regard to women's rights and social standing.

Recent academic discourse in Malaysia reveals that, although diversity of thought is acknowledged by Islamic education leaders, classroom practices are unlikely to change in the near future. Resolutions drafted at the International Seminar on Religious Curricula in the Muslim World held at the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur in September 2005 asserted that the methods of teaching religious curricula should be "based on promoting and respecting freedom of opinion and religion, freedom of expression and right of disagreement, and right of others in living in peace and security with their faiths and styles." However, the conference also concluded that "there shall be no focus on differences of ideological and jurisprudential schools in the religious curricula." It called upon educational institutions in the Muslim world to "clean and exclude the religious curricula from all contents and methods that strengthen and lead to disunity and disharmony among Muslims."[75]

The idea of broadening religious curricula to promote freedom of thought and expression yet suppressing discussion of differences among ideological and jurisprudential schools is paradoxical, to say the least. Observation of the current situation in Malaysian schools illuminates the problems generated by this ambiguous program.

Because government guidelines commonly present conservative views on Islam as immutable facts, textbook editors have reduced Islamic studies courses to a series of standardized questions requiring narrowly defined answers that leave little room for discussion. As a result, the rich debates over Islamic law and values that took place for centuries within Islamic scholarship are largely ignored. In their place one sees a culture of scholasticism that places greater emphasis on promoting a unitary interpretation of Islam than it does on nurturing critical thought.

At the core of the problem is conflict in Malaysian society over whether or not individuals have the right to interpret Islamic teachings, determine how they will practice their religion, and decide how to lead their own lives. Malaysians who disagree with the kinds of teachings presented in Islamic education courses in national schools have found themselves subjected to public ridicule, legal sanction, and even the threat of violence. Growing tension has thus become

apparent between those seeking greater orthodoxy within Malaysia's Muslim community and those who see Islam as a vehicle to address issues of social injustice and negotiate issues of multiculturalism in an inclusive manner. The question that presents itself at this juncture is whether Prime Minister Badawi's attempt to promote "progressive" views of Islam through his Islam Hadhari campaign will include efforts to reform the national Islamic education curriculum.

While the goals of Islam Hadhari are generally well received, it seems clear that the thinking that has produced an examination-oriented educational culture in Malaysia is likely to have a major impact on the long-standing tradition of Islamic education in this country. Studying Islam in Malaysia no longer entails an intensely personal teacher–student relationship. Rather, formalization of the curriculum and standardization of tests has created the danger of a rigidification of Islamic thought. If Malaysian educators cannot take it upon themselves to move beyond the construction and maintenance of orthodoxy, Prime Minister Badawi's high-minded efforts to promote a progressive and civilizational approach to Islam may well be in vain.

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4 ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN THAILAND
NEGOTIATING ISLAM, IDENTITY, AND MODERNITY

JOSEPH CHINYONG LIOW

Since January 2004, southern Thailand has been rocked by a sustained cycle of violence primarily, but not exclusively, targeted at extensions of the central state in the Malay-Muslim provinces. Investigations by state agencies and independent analysts have apparently uncovered several trails that have led to Islamic schools in the south. The more prominent cases include the arrest of Maisuri Haji Abdullah, a *Tok Guru* (traditional Islamic teacher) of an Islamic school in Narathiwat in June 2003 on charges of being a member of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and plotting to bomb Western embassies in Bangkok; the involvement of students from the Patthana Islam Witthaya Islamic school in the April 28, 2004 coordinated attacks on police outposts in the south; the arrest of several teachers from Tham Witthaya Islamic School on charges of being involved in the train of violence in the south; and, more recently, the apparent discovery of al-Qa'ida documents in Pattani's Jihad Witthaya Islamic School on May 19, 2005.

Allegations such as these have focused international attention on the Islamic school system in southern Thailand. Interest in Islamic schooling in the south, however, has not been accompanied by extensive research or analysis of the system. Few analysts, for example, have considered the fact that, while attention has often been focused on unregistered boarding (*pondok*) schools, the schools allegedly involved in violence are all registered education institutions. Misperceptions remain not only regarding the nature of ongoing violence in the south, but about the role of Islamic schools in the conflict. The Islamic school system in Thailand has been grossly understudied. Tensions and diversity within the system itself have been largely ignored.

My intention in this chapter is not to explain the causes of the violence in the south, but to provide a historiography of modern education in Thailand's Muslim society. Although Muslim communities and Islamic schools are not confined to the southern provinces, this chapter concentrates analysis on the Malay-Muslim provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, where the vast majority of Thai Muslims reside and where issues related to Islamic education are most challenging. The chapter argues that the Malay-Muslim community has increasingly exercised agency in its attempt to navigate between pressures generated by the need to preserve culture, knowledge, and identity on the one hand, and the demands of modernization and nationalism on the other. One consequence of this attempt to transform Islamic education, however, has been the emergence of contestations within the structures of Islamic education, creating cleavages that mirror general changes in Thailand's Muslim society.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The impetus to sustain religious and communal identities against the backdrop of a wider Buddhist culture has traditionally led Muslims in Thailand to look to independent religious education as an alternative to secular nationalist and Buddhist education, in an effort to win confirmation and recognition for Muslims.[1] This tendency has been especially apparent among the Malay-Muslims who comprise the dominant ethnic community in the southern provinces. In more recent times however, Muslim education has also emerged as an arena where tension and contestations within the Muslim community have

come to be expressed. This trend is now operating parallel to structural pressures created by state education policies.

Historically, education in Thailand revolved primarily around royal and religious institutions. Buddhist monks provided basic education to boys in classes set inside the compounds of monasteries, while children of the royal household and from the nobility were educated in order to serve in the court and govern in the provinces. The mass of society, made up mostly of farmers, had little access to formal education. Village history, lore, and local philosophy were transmitted orally. During the reign of King Rama V (1863–1910 A.D.), there was a growing recognition of the need for educated people to staff the growing bureaucracy. As a result, the Thai education system was modernized and made more accessible to the general public. This began with the 1898 Education Proclamation, which was strongly influenced by the British system and in which academic and vocational educational paths were both emphasized.

Aside from the pressing need to create a modern bureaucracy to sustain the rapid modernization and development that was taking place in Siam during the reign of Rama V, there was an additional rationale to the state's efforts to modernize education. It was during this period that the notion of a "national" identity was being promoted revolving around the slogan "Nation, Religion, Monarchy." The program of nation making also led to efforts to assimilate Thailand's minority ethnic groups. Through the mandatory use of Thai language and other policies, education became an instrument of nation making and assimilation.

Islamic education in Thailand has traditionally revolved around the institution of the traditional Islamic boarding school or pondok. Pondoks provided basic and advanced instruction in Islamic traditions of knowledge. The schools are also closely associated with Malay-Muslim identity, serving as repositories and progenitors of Malay language, history, and culture. In the nineteenth century, the southern district of Patani was a regional center for Islamic higher education, attracting students from across Southeast Asia. Many students went on to travel for study in the Middle East. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, several Patani Muslims became prominent scholars in the Middle East, including at the the Masjid Al-Haram in Mecca, where Patani scholars were popularly known as *ulama Jawi*.[2] Back home, Tok

Guru translated sermons and religious commentaries from Arabic to the modified Arabic-Malay script known as Jawi. Although Patani's prominence as a center for Islamic education has waned in recent decades, its historical legacy continues to inform Malay-Muslim identity and educational practices in the southern provinces.

STATE, EDUCATION, AND MALAY-MUSLIM SOCIETY

Prior to the implementation of the 1961 Pondok Educational Improvement Program, pondoks were viewed not as educational but religious institutions. The profile of the typical pondok graduate—well-versed in religious knowledge but lacking an understanding of Thai national history, not conversant in the Thai language, and lacking technical skills—had long been a matter of concern for the Thai government.

The early 1920s witnessed the first of more than eighty years of government-sponsored efforts to integrate Muslim schools into the national mainstream, a process that had a corrosive impact on center–periphery relations. Early policies took the form of enforced integration through the introduction of government schools into the southern provinces and enactments like the 1921 Compulsory Education Act, legislation requiring four years of primary education for all children. State schools were viewed with suspicion in the Muslim community, despite the fact that the state required two hours of Islamic studies each week, a policy that remains in place to this day. Many Malay-Muslim parents feared the schools were actually part of a larger state campaign to convert Muslims. As a result, most parents kept their children out of state schools, so that the majority of students came from the ranks of Malay civil servants and aristocrats.

Recognizing that the integration project had largely failed, Bangkok officials considered closing the pondok. Aware of the ramifications of such a policy, however, they eventually settled for a more measured program of introducing Thai teachers, language instruction, and educational materials into Muslim schools. Such policies ebbed and flowed through the administrations of the democrat Pridi Panomyong (1946–1947), who was viewed as sympathetic to Thailand's Malay-Muslim minorities, and Field Marshall Phibun Songgkram (1948–1957), under whom policies of assimilation peaked.

Attempts to integrate and assimilate Muslim education reached a watershed in 1961 with the introduction of the Pondok Educational

Improvement Program (PEIP). The PEIP promised financial aid to pondoks in exchange for their registering with the government and introducing academic and vocational subjects with Thai as the medium of instruction. Within a year of its introduction, 197 pondoks registered; 400 had done so by the final year of registration in 1971.[3] Although couched in terms of government support for the modernization of Muslim education, the PEIP represented a powerful projection of state power into an erstwhile closed educational system. In 1949, the Thai government had as part of its larger program of "Thainization" promulgated the Private School Act that required all private schools to register with the Education Ministry and bring their curriculum into conformity with government guidelines. Because pondok schools were classified as religious institutions and *not* private schools at the time, they fell outside the ambit of the act. The 1961 PEIP can thus be viewed as a political initiative to achieve what the Private School Act had failed to achieve in 1949, heightened state control over the pondok.

The program succeeded in achieving a measure of school modernization, but it also heightened local suspicions of state authorities. Indeed, although four hundred pondoks registered, another hundred closed down or went underground in protest of state policies. More generally, the government program disrupted "the process by which the Malay-Muslim community used to produce its intellectuals," thereby diminishing Pattani's status as a center for Islamic education.[4] The surviving schools became instruments for a broader cultural resistance to perceived Thai colonialism. Large numbers of religious leaders and students were politicized, and gradually Islamic schools became the front line in the contest between Bangkok and the southern provinces. Another inadvertent consequence of the state program was an exodus of students for study in Muslim schools abroad.

Notwithstanding these trends, government policies have succeeded in transforming the structure and curriculum of pondoks. Few traditional independent pondoks remain, and those that do are contemplating registration in order to obtain subsidies. The government's attempt in January 2004 to encourage registration in exchange for aid was generally welcomed.[5] Education ministry regulations require that schools that register fulfil basic requirements concerning school location, class size, and teacher certification. Many of the remaining independent pondoks

do not meet these requirements, and even those that do are struggling to strike a balance between government regulations and their desire to preserve a measure of autonomy.

Efforts to modernize Islamic education, however, have not been without benefit. The creation of modern secondary education in the form of madrasah and SARs (*sekolah agama rakyat* or private Islamic schools) has facilitated an increase in the number of Muslim students now entering Thailand's universities. The increase has been possible as a result of the introduction of examinations for the higher secondary certificate of Thai education that Muslim students now can take alongside their Arabic-religious education stream. The certification has allowed Muslim students to compete with their non-Muslim counterparts from national schools for seats in higher education. Muslim students' efforts have also been helped by the Ministry of Interior's implementation of a quota system for Muslim students entering national universities.

THE STRUCTURE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Under the new constitution and the National Education Act (2542/1999) the government is obliged to provide all students with nine years of compulsory education and twelve years of free education: six years of elementary (*Ibtidai*), three years of middle (*Mutawassit*), and three years of secondary (*Thanawi*) levels. Despite the fact that southern Thailand has both Islamic and secular national schools, some observers estimate that 85 percent of Malay-Muslim students attend Islamic schools.[6] The figures for the year 2000 (see Table 4.1) provided by the Ministry of Education for the southern Malay-Muslim provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani, along with Satun and Songkla, illustrate the pervasiveness of Islamic schools. National schools in the Malay areas of the south have among the lowest rates of attendance of national schools anywhere in Thailand.[7] This is because Malay-Muslim parents tended to view national schools as essentially Buddhist schools.[8]

There are five levels of formal Islamic education in Thailand: (1) *sekolah anubahn* (nursery); (2) *tadika* (Taman Didikan Kanak-kanak or kindergarten); (3) *pondok;* (4) *madrasah* or *sekolah agama rakyat* (SARs or Islamic private schools, also known as the Institute of Learning—Pondok); (5) *institut pengajian tinggi* (universities and tertiary education institutions).

Table 4.1. Private, Islamic, and Public Schools by Province

Lower Secondary Level

Province	Private Schools	Islamic Private Schools	Public Schools
Yala	146	6,450	2,094
Pattani	N.A.	6,183	2,409
Narathiwat	20	4,483	2,421
Satun	N.A.	1,465	2,119
Songkhla	2,156	2,157	10,533

Upper Secondary Level

Province	Private Schools	Islamic Private Schools	Public Schools
Yala	N.A.	3,952	1,317
Pattani	N.A.	3,722	1,656
Narathiwat	N.A.	2,421	1,680
Satun	N.A.	692	1,735
Songkhla	585	637	6,754

Source: Ministry of Education—Thailand, *A Brief Report on Development of the Islamic Private Schools in Regions 2, 3, and 4 in the Fiscal Year 2000* (Bangkok: Office of Private Education Committee, Ministry of Education, n.d.). Also found in Hasan Madmarn, "Secular Education, Values and Development in the Context of Islam in Thailand: An Outlook on Muslim Attitudes toward Thai Educational Policy," in Syed Farid Alatas, Lim Teck Ghee, and Kazuhide Kurada, eds., *Asian Interfaith Dialogue: Perspectives on Religion, Education, and Social Cohesion* (Singapore and Washington, D.C.: RIMA and The World Bank, 2003), pp. 75–76.

In what follows I briefly describe the aims and curriculum of each type of schools.

Sekolah Anubahn and Tadika

Islamic schooling in Thailand typically begins with the recitation of the Qur'an at home. In recent years, however, sekolah anubahn and tadika schools have been established in mosques and have taken over much of the responsibility for early religious education. Sekolah anubahn, Muslim child-care facilities for infants and toddlers, are a recent phenomenon in southern Thailand. *Tadika* schools are run by, and located in, mosques strewn throughout the southern provinces as well as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and their vicinity. In the south, *tadika* can be found in almost every village. *Tadika* schools obtain financial assistance from the state and provide integrated primary education combining religious and secular subjects.

Traditional Pondoks

Traditional Islamic education in Thailand has been built around the institution of the pondok. Some sources trace the establishment of the first pondok in Thailand to 1624 in Talok Manok or present-day Narathiwat province.[9] Unlike their counterparts in Indonesia, pondoks only provide religious instruction. The pondok revolves around the Tok Guru, who is typically venerated as a knowledgeable and pious man, not only by his students, but often by nearby villagers as well. Many pondok have been established by Muslim scholars who have returned from the pilgrimage to Mecca or from extended stays in Middle Eastern schools.[10] Typical pondoks operate as boarding houses, not unlike the pesantren of Indonesia, and students live in accommodations within the compound of the school.

Insofar as pedagogy is concerned, Hasan Madmarn has argued that "the methodology of *pondok* education in Southern Thailand was and is . . . similar to the widely recognized system of the intellectual learning process among the institutions in medieval Islam."[11] Pondok pedagogy centers on rote learning, recitation, and memorization. Tok Guru expound on religious texts and scriptures while students transcribe copious interlinear notes directly into their texts. No formal accreditation system exists; nor do pondok students qualify for entry into tertiary institutions of learning. Assessment instead depends on the

personal judgment of the Tok Guru. As there is no age limit, pondok students range from those in their early teens to elderly adults, almost always male, who retire to pondok for spiritual reflection. However, most pondok students enter in their late teens and early twenties, after completing three years of compulsory secondary education.

Because there is no standardized curriculum, and because the popularity of any single pondok depends on the reputation of its Tok Guru, pondok students often move from one pondok to another to study under specialists in specific fields such as *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *hadith* (Prophetic tradition), *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis), *tasawwuf* (Sufism), and *kalam* (theology). Pondok graduates perpetuate this system of personalized education by becoming either assistant teachers to respected Tok Guru or, for those with sufficient learning, establishing their own pondok.

Some 350 pondoks, since January 4, 2004, have either registered with the government or are in the process of registering.[12] A handful of schools still refuse to register. When queried on their reluctance, the most common reason cited by Tok Guru at these schools was concern that their school's emphasis on religion would be diluted if ties to the state were strengthened.

The political character of the pondok has been a matter of vigorous academic debate. According to Surin Pitsuwan, politics is integral to the pondok, and Tok Guru view one of their responsibilities as "necessarily the sporadic outbursts of political opposition to the central government in their quest for a higher degree of self-rule."[13] By contrast, however, the anthropologist Raymond Scupin suggests that "there was no explicit political purpose within the *Pondoks*."[14] Whatever their precise disposition, the politics of pondoks is clearly related to their effort to maintain their role as the primary transmitters of religious knowledge for Malay Muslims.

Islamic Private Schools (SARs), Madrasah, and Institutes of Learning (Pondoks)

Despite the centrality of pondoks in southern Thailand's cultural history, today only about 5 percent of Malay-Muslim students study in pondok schools.[15] The vast majority of Malay-Muslim students have instead chosen to attend the SARs.[16] The declining popularity of the pondok is the result of two trends. First, the directors of

Muslim schools have been pressed by Bangkok authorities to adopt a more bureaucratic administration and introduce vocational and secular training for their students so as to align their curricula with the requirements of the national system. Second, there is a pragmatic recognition in the Muslim community that the traditional pondok is no longer effective at preparing Muslim youths for modern economic and educational challenges. As Hasan Madmarn observed, "in the village there is no preparation for religious training among the people and the parents do not encourage their children to study in independent *pondok*. Because many of these villagers are poor farmers and fishermen, their economic problems may inhibit them from their obligatory Islamic duty to educate their children."[17] The creation of SAR schools, then, was part of the Muslim community's attempt to develop a hybrid school system that would include both religious and general education. In most SARs, religious instruction is provided in the morning and the evening, while the afternoons are reserved for nonreligious subjects. Unlike the traditional pondok, SARs provide their students with the nationally recognized credentials for pursuing further schooling in Thailand's higher educational system. Because of the added emphasis on general education, unlike the case with traditional pondok, students in SARs have much more exposure to the Thai language. This is because, while religious studies are conducted in local Malay or Arabic, instruction in general education is done in Thai. The increasing salience of Thai-language instruction in the Islamic schools of southern Thailand cannot be overemphasized. Historically, the reluctance of the local Malay-Muslim population to learn the Thai language on the one hand, and the inability of the central Thai government to countenance the community's desire to preserve local language and culture on the other, had been a source of friction. At its height, the perceived threat to local language and culture posed by Thai nationalism, expressed in national language policies, was met with violence driven by separatist ideology.

The creation of SARs began with government policies promulgated in 1961 to officially register pondok schools under the Pondok Educational Improvement Program. Later, in 1970, the Ministry of Education formulated the Education Promotion Project that sought to develop a stream of education for registered pondoks, one that entailed the teaching of academic and vocational courses alongside religious

studies. These objectives came under the purview of the Private Islamic Schools Improvement Committee, created by the Ministry of Education in 1973, whose role was to advise the ministry on matters pertaining to Islamic education and align Muslim schools with the standards set for national education curricula. In 1982, the SAR private Islamic school was officially created and placed under the auspices of the Private Education Committee at the Ministry of Education. In the latest policy shift, traditional pondoks registered after January 4, 2004, are no longer known as SARs, but as Institutes of Learning (pondoks). There are currently some 298 SARs in southern Thailand, with a further 214 registered pondoks undergoing transition to Institutes of Learning—pondoks. According to Muslim educators, 80 percent of Muslim students who successfully passed the government university entrance examinations came from SARs.[18]

Paradoxically, while cognizant of the challenges of modernization, many in the Muslim community still believe that traditional pondoks should continue to play a central role in Muslim education as an informal supplement to modern Islamic schools. There have been calls for the government to promote pondok education for evening and/or weekend instruction in religion. Indeed, although the great majority of Malay-Muslim students are officially enrolled in SARs, many also attend traditional pondok schools in the evening, where they receive instruction in Islamic traditions of knowledge.

Institut Pengajian Tinggi

At present, tertiary Islamic education in southern Thailand revolves around two institutions—the College of Islamic Studies at Prince of Songkla University in Pattani, and Yala Islamic College in Yala and Pattani. Plans for a third university, Princess of Narathiwatrajnakarin University, are currently being discussed between the government, an advisory committee consisting of prominent Muslim academics and scholars from Thailand, and external advisers from Egypt's al-Azhar University.

Islamic higher education in Thailand traces its genesis to the Department of Philosophy and Religion at the Prince of Songkla University, which introduced an Islamic studies program in 1982. The rationale for this program, which subsequently evolved into a full-fledged College of Islamic Studies in accordance with the 5th

National Economic and Social Development Plan (1982–1986), was from the start openly political. Plans for the Islamic higher education were first mooted by the National Security Council as part of "efforts to solve the problems of the southern border provinces."[19] The college was envisaged as addressing these concerns in two ways. First, it was to provide a means for tertiary education in religious studies for SAR graduates. Second, through its short-term programs catering to non-Muslim government officials posted to the south, the college was also an attempt to facilitate interaction and mutual understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims. Instruction at the college is done in three languages—English, Arabic, and Thai. The Islamic studies program consists of two streams, one in Arabic and the other in Thai.

Yala Islamic College (YIC) was formed in 1998 in Tambun Budi, Yala province, with the inauguration of a faculty of religious studies with departments in Islamic law (*syariah*) and principles of religion (*usul ad-din*). A second campus was established at Bukit Datu in Kampung Serong, Pattani, in 2003. The rationale for this college was the observation that while the SAR system had provided many Muslim students with basic secondary education, very few entered public universities, and even fewer had the opportunity to pursue tertiary studies overseas.[20] The effort to establish a college that could cater to this pool of students was spearheaded by Malay-Muslim academics. The YIC was established under the Southern Higher Education Foundation and continues to be supervised by the Committee of Higher Education Institutions at the Ministry of Education.

While the syllabus of the YIC revolves around religious studies, it has also begun to develop a parallel curriculum in general studies. In 2004 the college introduced departments of public administration and information technology under a faculty of science, and a department of Islamic banking and finance. Courses in the Islamic studies faculty are taught in Arabic; courses in public administration and Islamic finance are taught in Thai; information technology training is conducted in English. The Yala campus also has an international language academy that teaches Arabic, English, Chinese, Malay, and Thai. The college is currently awaiting government approval for a syllabus toward an M.A. in Islamic civilisation as well as an M.A. in teaching and *dakwah* (religious appeal).[21]

For all degrees, students are required to take basic courses in Islamic studies. All students, including those taking courses in Thai and English, also have to memorize two chapters of the Qur'an before graduation. It is important to note, however, that being a Muslim is not a requirement for admission to the YIC, and the college is envisaged not only as an institution of tertiary education but also as an avenue for "religious appeal" (*dakwah*) to non-Muslims as well as Muslims.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

For much of their history, pondoks in Thailand have primarily been funded by alms (*zakat*) from the communities in which the religious schools were located. Often the almsgiving was supplemented by small-scale agricultural activities of the pondok students and Tok Guru. As a result of these subventions, many schools were able to provide their students with tuition-free education. Still today some pondoks, like Alfatah Papao Pondok in Kabang, Yala, provide stipends of several hundred baht per week to their students. While some of these traditional revenue sources remain, Islamic schools today receive funding from a variety of sources, including private donors, the Thai government, and external benefactors such as foreign Islamic governments and charities.[22]

Because of concerns over foreign funding, Bangkok authorities have recently begun to pressure Islamic schools to accept a greater share of government funding. Since January 4, 2004, when the government passed legislation for the registration of pondoks, those that registered and converted to SARs and that operate under the auspices of an official in-house foundation (*yayasan*) receive 5 million baht from the government per year for every five hundred pupils.[23] This subsidy compares to just 100,000–200,000 baht for pondoks that have registered but have not introduced academic courses into their educational curriculum.[24] For SARs, these subsidies account for 100 percent of the school budget, as compared to a decade ago when government subsidized only 60 percent of their budget. Though SARs and pondoks are recipients of government funding, they are also free to receive donations from private interests within Thailand or abroad.[25]

While the College of Islamic Studies has benefited from association with Prince of Songkla University (PSU) in terms of funding, Yala

Islamic College has primarily been funded by private and external donors. The World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), the Islamic Development Bank, and the International Islamic Relief Organization have been instrumental in the formation of the Yala Islamic College, as have the governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar. The college does receive some government funding, but the funds are only used for extracurricular activities. That said, the college has submitted a request for formal funding as part of a process to secure full university status.

Although their precise share is impossible to determine, since the 1970s foreign governments and Islamic charities have played an important role in funding Islamic education in Thailand. Much of this aid has taken the form of scholarships. Because government educational policies in the 1960s were perceived as undermining Islamic education, many Muslim scholars opted to pursue their education overseas, primarily in the Middle East, and often through scholarships. Many of these scholars were funded by the host governments as well as Islamic charities. At present it is conservatively estimated that some three hundred Thai Muslims receive scholarships from institutions in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and elsewhere in the Middle East, while another two hundred are funded by institutions in Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and Sudan.[26] But some observers have suggested that these figures are too conservative. One Muslim correspondent in this study speculated that there are currently seventeen hundred Thai students in Egypt alone.[27]

While Egypt has long been the country of choice for overseas study, a growing number of students have been making their way to Saudi Arabia's Medina University as well as institutions in Pakistan.[28] The growing number of students graduating from Middle Eastern institutions has already had a palpable effect on Islamic schooling in Thailand. Many of these students return to take up teaching positions in the SARs and Institute of Learning—Pondok. The returned students have introduced new teaching techniques, and their views on local Muslim culture and education have sometimes caused tensions. For example, some instructors trained in Saudi Arabia are said to teach that the four *Madhhab,* and in particular the *Shafi'i* school long dominant in Southeast Asia, should not be viewed as the final word on Islamic jurisprudence.[29]

NETWORKED EDUCATION

In the nineteenth century, the Pattani district's reputation as a center for Islamic education attracted Muslims from around the region to its schools. Pattani's reputation was further expanded as a result of the missionary (*tabligh*) travels of southern Thai ulama to Indonesia, Malaysia, and Cambodia. Malaysia has a historically significant place in this context. Robert Winzeler has noted that "important religious leaders in Kelantan trace their families back to Pattani and it is thus not unlikely that the traditional schools derive at some point from this area as well."[30]

Today ulama from southern Thailand do not play the exemplary role they once did around the region, but contacts with overseas educators still take place. At present, there are a number of Malaysian (and a smaller number of Indonesian) teachers teaching in SARs in the south. Most, however, are Malay-language instructors and few are actually involved in teaching religion.[31] On the other hand, religious teachers from the southern provinces continue to teach in religious schools in Malaysia and Indonesia, though their numbers have dwindled significantly since the height of these exchanges in the early twentieth century.

More generally, tensions between Bangkok and the Muslim south have negatively affected foreign student enrollment in Islamic schools in the southern provinces. Although foreign students can still be found in the region's SARs and pondok, their numbers pale in comparison to the prewar era, with most coming from Cambodia and Burma through unofficial channels.[32] Likewise, tertiary education institutions have few foreign students, although YIC has experienced a steady stream in its short life span, with about a hundred foreigners currently enrolled in the departments of *Syariah* and *usul ad-din* at the faculty of Islamic studies.[33]

While foreign student numbers have decreased, foreign-trained faculty have increased. Of the 150 instructors currently employed at Yala Islamic College, eight are of foreign nationality, coming from Malaysia, Indonesia, Algeria, Sudan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. In both the PSU and YIC, teachers received most of their advanced training at foreign institutions. Many are graduates from al-Azhar and Medina University, though an increasing number make their way to the International Islamic University in Malaysia (IIU) and the State

Institute of Islamic Studies of Indonesia (IAIN). Although it is difficult to determine the precise number of SAR teachers who have trained overseas, anecdotal evidence suggests that their numbers are large. These links with foreign institutions are for the most part the result of individual students who have received scholarships from foreign sponsors. At times, such networks take on more institutionalized form, such as the case with Tham Witthaya SAR in Yala, which regularly sends its students to al-Azhar University and Indonesian universities and religious schools on the basis of a "Memorandum of Understanding" for the latter to host, on an annual basis, a selected number of Tham Witthaya graduates.[34]

Local networks are built around two centers: student organizations and school associations. The most prominent student organization is the Thai Muslim Students Association ([TMSA]). Established in 1965 by a Malay-Muslim politician, Wan Muhammad Nor Matha, the TMSA was created to facilitate collaboration between all Muslim communities in Thailand through tertiary education. In 1967, graduates from TMSA came together to form the Young Muslim Association of Thailand (YMAT), which then established strong ties with the Malaysia's highly politicized Muslim student association, the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or ABIM). ABIM-style activism did not appeal to all members of the YMAT, however, and the resulting tensions have undermined YMAT's ability to present itself as a coherent voice of Muslim students in Thailand.

Traditional pondoks and SARs come under the administration of the Pondok Association (Persatuan Pondok) and the Islamic Private School Association (Persatuan Sekolah Agama Rakyat) respectively. Both were created in 2004 by the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand against the backdrop of a intensification of violence and heightened suspicion of Islamic schools. Their purpose was to improve the administration and curriculum of Islamic institutions. Formed in 1997, the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand is the sole statutory religious organization established for the legislation and administration of Islamic religious affairs in the country.

CURRICULUM AND TEXTS

Islamic education in Malay-speaking Thailand has traditionally been based on the so-called yellow books (*kitab kuning* or *kitab jawi*),

classical Malay and Arabic religious literature written in a modified Arabic script (see Chap. 1, this book). "[T]the ideas passed in these texts and explanation pursued orally by scholars have tremendous impact on their followers: for a simple reason, the widespread [*sic*] of their use and the nature of teacher-student ties in religious circles."[35] From the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, Pattani was also a center for the publication of new Islamic books through publishing houses like the Patani and Nahdi Press.[36] Although the Muslim press has declined in recent years, a few publishers like the Saudara Press continue to produce the works of notable Pattani scholars.

In terms of content, the writings of classical scholars like Abu Hamid Muhammad Al-Ghazzali (1058–1111) and Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani (1818–1897) have long dominated Pattani scholarship and instruction on jurisprudence, theology, Sufism, and ethics.[37] Pattani ulama played a key role in editing, translating, and authenticating these works for use in Islamic schools throughout Southeast Asia.[38] The writings of Middle Eastern reformists like Muhammad Abduh (1825–1905) and Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1839–1897) became popular among the Pattani ulama and Muslim intelligentsia in the early twentieth century. The renowned Pattani scholar Haji Sulong was greatly influenced by Abduh, and he subscribed to the latter's teaching that the selective adoption of Western innovations by Muslims was not antithetical to Islam.

In order to scrutinize carefully the curriculum of Islamic schools in the Malay-Muslim provinces, the Ministry of Education created the Office of Local District Education Region (OLDER) under the National Education Act (2542/19999). Encompassed within the operational boundaries of this office were previous departments and offices charged with overseeing education policy in the Malay-Muslim provinces, such as the Office of Education Region Two and the Provincial and District Education Offices.[39] The OLDER works closely with individual SARs and school associations to coordinate the curriculum at elementary (*ibtidai*), middle (*mutawassit*), and secondary (*thanawi*) levels. The curriculum itself is divided relatively evenly between religious and general subjects (50–50), though certain schools have instituted a breakdown consisting of 18–22 hours per week for religious education and 22–28 hours a week for secular subjects.[40]

A primary concern of state officials has been the need for Islamic education to address the sociopolitical challenges confronting Thailand's Malay-Muslim minority. This concern finds expression in state responses to the use of imported Islamic studies literature in Islamic schools. In this regard, Hasan Madmarn offers two explanations for the government's concerns. First, he observes that imported textbooks "may not fully serve the needs" of Thailand's Muslim-minority community, and even attract Thai students away from local schools to foreign institutions.[41] Second, Madmarn also notes that reproduced imported texts are more expensive compared to locally written and produced literature. While both these concerns are valid, there is a third issue that Hasan Madmarn fails to mention—the Thai government's increasing alarm over the influx of radical ideology through foreign educational material.[42] Consequently, the Education Ministry has been careful to encourage and monitor the production of local material, primarily Arabic texts with Malay explanatory notes. Nevertheless, in order to balance these security concerns with sensitivity toward the character of Islamic religious education practices, provisions have also been made for upper secondary level students in SARs to use Middle Eastern texts that advance students' understanding of Arabic, so as to prepare students who intend to pursue further education in the Middle East.[43] The result of this is an approximate balance of 80 to 20 percent between locally written and imported textbooks.[44] Aside from printed texts, the Internet has played an increasingly important role in Muslim education, and websites such as www.sasnupatam.com and www.muslimthai.com stand out as the most popular Internet resources.

REFORMISM AND MUSLIM EDUCATION

As was the case throughout Southeast Asia, Islam in Thailand for much of its early history was broadly syncretic in nature, coexisting with earlier Hinduistic and Malay religio-spiritual beliefs and practices. Muslim reformism, however, has challenged this heritage, and continues to do so today.

Reformist Islam in Thailand was rooted in the late-nineteenth-century Islamic reformism of the Salafiyya movement inspired by, among others, Egypt's Muhammad Abduh. Abduh's ideas of authenticity based solely on the Qur'an and hadith were popularized in Southeast Asia through the journal *Al-Manar,* established by his

student Rashid Rida, which in turn spawned several regional journals. This reformist tradition was brought to Thailand by Ahmad Wahab, a Sumatran member of the Indonesian modernist organization Muhammadiyah who had studied in Mecca and was subsequently exiled by the Dutch colonial authorities for his political views. Settling in Taman Tok, Bangkok, Wahab slowly expanded his following and established Ansorisunnah, the first reformist organization in Thailand. His following included Direk Kulsiriswasd (Ibrahim Qureyshi), who later translated the Qur'an into Thai. Under Wahab's leadership, Bangkok soon became the center of reformist thinking for the Muslim intelligentsia and middle class. A South Asian variant of Wahhabism soon found its way to Thailand with the formation by Pakistani migrant workers of the Jami-yatul Islam. Modeled along the lines of the Pakistani Jama'at-e-Islami, Jami-yatul began as an ethnic organization of South Asians, but gradually opened its doors to all Muslims in Thailand.

Islamic reformism in the region targeted certain folk traditions in an effort to "purify" local Islam. In order to facilitate this process of purification and moral edification, reformists translated the Qur'an into local vernaculars (Thai in Bangkok and Malay in the southern provinces) and urged that Friday sermons (*khutbah*) be delivered in Thai so that the public could understand them.[45] The reform movement was viewed by the traditional Muslim elite as a challenge to its authority. Although in the 1970s the influence of reformist Islam was curtailed through the efforts of the traditional religious establishment and the Thai state, the movement's influence continues to grow with increased religious education and the growing number of Thais studying in the Middle East and South Asia.[46]

The nexus between Islamic reformism and Muslim education in southern Thailand was personified in the life and struggles of Haji Sulong bin Haji Abdul Kadir. Haji Sulong is widely viewed as the champion of Malay cultural autonomy in prewar Thailand. In addition to being politically active, however, he made equally significant contributions to Muslim education. In fact, he had already set the process of pondok reform in motion in the 1930s. Sulong was among the much celebrated generation of Patani Islamic scholars who had studied the works of the great reformers Muhammad Abduh and Jamaluddin al-Afghani in Mecca. Upon his return to Pattani in 1927, he embarked on an ambitious program to reform the pondok system, which he saw

as steeped in animism and incapable of responding to the social and economic challenges of the day.[47] The decadent condition of the pondok, Sulong argued, had facilitated the Thai government's meddling in Muslim affairs. In 1933, long before the Thai government's introduction of programs to modernize Islamic education in the 1960s and 1970s, Haji Sulong opened the Madrasah al-Maarif al-Wataniyyah, a modern madrasa that included general and vocational education as well as religious education in its curriculum. Haji Sulong's efforts in Pattani met with fierce opposition on the part of traditional ulama, who viewed his reforms as a threat to their and the pondok system's authority.[48] Viewed with equal consternation by state officials, Haji Sulong's madrasa was closed in 1935.

Since the late 1980s, Saudi funding has helped to increase the influence of Wahhabist variants of Islamic reform in southern Thailand. Islamic leaders interviewed for this project estimated that some twenty to forty religious schools in the area promulgate Wahhabi teachings.[49] Funding often comes with textbooks, teacher training, and directives for curricular reform. Most traditionalist scholars regard the new Wahhabi teachings as a challenge to traditionalist ideas. One Tok Guru interviewed opined that both the Wahhabi and Kaum Muda (reformist-modernist) were "*sangat takbur*" (very arrogant) in their attitude toward more established schools of Islamic thought.[50] Others described the residual tension between the Kaum Muda and Kaum Tua (traditionalists) as being that between those who think themselves "faultless" (*yang merasa sempurna*) and traditionalists who resist change.[51]

Tension between traditionalists and reformists that echo the Old Group versus New Group (Kaum Tua–Kaum Muda, see Chapter 1 of this volume) contestations in the prewar Malay world have since surfaced again in southern Thailand. New Group reformists embrace modernist approaches to Islamic education by injecting academic and secular subjects into the curriculum. However, many also emphasize the need to "Islamize" epistemology and pedagogy by delineating their connection to Islam and, where possible, introducing Arabic terminologies. In other words, these reformist scholars aim to combine Islamic knowledge with familiarity with Western scholarship in sciences while advocating a return to a Salafist interpretation of pristine Islam. According to its proponents, these efforts are in part a consequence of the perceived failure of traditionalists and secularists from the Islamic

education establishment to meet the demands of an Islamic community increasingly challenged by Western intellectual traditions and politico-strategic hegemony.[52] Another feature of new reformist trends in Islamic education is the increased emphasis on Arabic language as the linguistic medium through which sacred knowledge is transmitted. Traditional Malay society prized the local Malay language and Jawi script as the language of Islam. This was epitomized most profoundly by the proliferation of major works of Islamic scholarship by Malay scholars, which were written in the traditional Jawi script. Such was the salience of language in Malay conceptions of Islam, even discussions in the Malay *Halqah* of *Masjid Haram* were conducted in the Malay language.

LOCALIZING "WAHHABISM"—THE CASE OF ISMAIL LUTFI

The reformist movement in southern Thailand is today led by Ismail Lutfi, who graduated in 1986 from the Islamic University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud in Medina with a doctorate in shari'a. Lutfi is the rector of the Yala Islamic College, which boasts modern facilities in both its campuses in Pattani and Yala, and also principal of a SAR in Muang, Pattani, where he conducts a weekly lecture (*khutbah*) from its mosque, often in front of an audience in excess of a thousand people. Lutfi is also a popular speaker in Islamic scholarly circles in northern Malaysia. With Saudi support, Lutfi has single-handedly directed the expansion of the contemporary reformist agenda in Thailand.

Lutfi's personal charisma has ensured that, notwithstanding continuing traditionalist opposition to some of his views, he has emerged as one of the most popular religious scholars in Thailand. His fluency in Arabic allows him to demonstrate a deep knowledge of scripture that few in Thailand's Islamic intelligentsia can match. He is also seen as a scholar who has the ability to simplify complex concepts of Islamic thought. His charisma and communicative skills have only added to concerns among traditionalist scholars that his brand of Islam will appeal to the younger generation.[53]

Lutfi's popularity has also been enhanced by his savvy use of modern communications. He makes ready use of microphones, cassette recorders, and CDs in a way that distinguishes him from traditional religious teachers. Aside from his religious credentials and oratorical skills, Lutfi's popularity is further enhanced by his access

to substantial amounts of Saudi financial support, which he manages and disburses through his Islamic charity, Islah, which has branches in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. The Saudi government has also been instrumental in setting up the Yala Islamic College.

There is no question that Lutfi views his reformist agenda for transformation of Islamic education in Thailand as part of the advancement of Islamic knowledge in the region. This vision has, however, caused some disquiet in mainstream traditionalist Islamic circles. Contrary to conventional wisdom that has long viewed Pattani as a center of excellence in Islamic studies, Lutfi argues that earlier epochs of Islam in Thailand were in fact marked by a notable lack of religious knowledge (*ilmu*).[54] According to Lutfi, "Islamic knowledge in Thailand used to be weak, and 'traditional' Islam was based on this lack of knowledge. But it (*ilmu*) has improved over time. This leads to a deeper understanding of Islam."[55]

A key component of Lutfi's reformist agenda has been his effort to make Islamic studies speak to modern science in a manner that emphasizes the religious roots of modernity. To that end, Lutfi and his reformist associates stress that the modernization of Malay-Muslim education through the introduction of general educational subjects (albeit with Islamic principles) into the traditional education system is in line with the teachings of Islam. Likewise, deans at the Yala Islamic College have been asked to expand their curriculum to include information technology, business and finance, and the social sciences, but in a manner that allows for the injection of Islamic principles and considerations into these erstwhile secular fields.[56]

Despite his message of the need to modernize Islamic education, a theme that resonates with government concerns, Lutfi continues to be demonized in the media and policy circles as a "hardline Wahhabi cleric," and his agenda for the transformation of Islamic education in Thailand has been portrayed as a program aimed to radicalize Muslims.[57] Many of these allegations have been based on Lutfi's training in Saudi Arabia (where he attained his bachelor's and doctoral degrees) and his continuing ties to both government and private interests in the kingdom. Under more careful scrutiny however, Lutfi appears to be a more complex figure than these analysts imply.

Although he studied at the Islamic University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud, the greatest influence on Lutfi's intellectual

and religio-ideological persuasion did not come from conventional Wahhabi instructors. His tutor and supervisor was Shaykh Said Hawwa, a Syrian lecturer and member of the Muslim Brotherhood who taught in Saudi Arabia during Lutfi's sojourn there.[58] In fact, in his dissertation on shari'a, Lutfi argued for the importance of contextual approaches when applying Islamic law. At least on this point, Lutfi's views echo those of many "contextualizing" and "progressive" Muslim scholars who also call for flexibility in the application of law. However, on other points Lutfi's understanding of jurisprudence no doubt differs from that of these progressive scholars.[59]

Some other aspects of Lutfi's activities draw into further question his "Wahhabi" credentials. For instance, while mainstream Wahhabism rejects *mawlid* (celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday), in recent years Lutfi has contributed to an annual collection of essays compiled by Thai Islamic scholars and published by the Islamic Center of Thailand on the occasion of the Prophet's birthday.[60] Furthermore, while much is made of the financial support that Lutfi's Yala Islamic College has received from the governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the government of Qatar—not normally known for a strict scripturalist position on Islam—has also provided the college with substantial funds.[61] More notable yet, the college has also applied to the U.S.-linked Asia Foundation for a grant in support of English-language training for its faculty and study trips to Malaysia.[62]

If Lutfi is indeed a Wahhabi (and not just a Salafi, as he himself claims), there are clearly aspects to his brand that go against the grain of what is popularly understood to be mainstream Wahhabism. It bears recalling here how Islam had adjusted itself to suit local cultures and belief systems when it arrived on Southeast Asian shores, thereby giving rise to the localized Islam that has become the trademark of the region. Perhaps what we see in Ismail Lutfi is something analogous. Lutfi's brand of "Wahhabism" appears to have undergone a similar process of "localization." It is important to note that Lutfi himself does not accept the term "Wahhabi" and has written a book in Thai in which he describes himself as a Salafi and distinguishes his Islamic ideological leanings from those of mainstream Wahhabism.[63] That said, on other occasions Lutfi has also defended the teachings of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab.[64]

GENDER AND EDUCATION

Enrollment trends in Islamic schools in southern Thailand indicate that a large number of Muslim girls are attending SARs. In fact, in twenty-five SARs researched for this project, female students outnumbered their male counterparts. The trend appears quite the opposite in traditional pondoks, where male students outnumber females. There are also three women-only SARs in Muang, Yaha (both in Yala province), and Tanjungluluk, Pattani. The largest of these, Wittaya Mulniti, enrolls two thousand students.

While the influx of Salafist-Wahhabi ideas into southern Thailand has threatened long-standing educational practices, there are nonetheless areas of continuity between the traditions. In particular, on gender concerns traditionalists and reformists voice similar opinions, largely conservative in nature, reflecting the general social conservatism of traditional Malay society. Instruction on the shari'a concerning divorce, for example, extends far greater privileges to men than to women, while jurisprudence in inheritance and child custody (in divorce cases) is weighted against the woman. On a few issues, however, local scholars diverge from conservative interpretations. On matters of women's employment, for example, scholarly opinion in southern Thailand has been considerably more liberal than in other places across the Muslim world. Women are widely accepted in the workforce, and this practice is also supported by the vast majority of teachers in Islamic schools. Indeed, as is the case elsewhere in the traditional Malay world, in southern Thailand today the marketplace and center of commerce remains a gendered space, where women preside over transactions and commercial activity. Most Muslims, both teachers and laymen, however, believe that while there are no obstacles to women making positive contributions to the economy, they need to know their primary "place" and "responsibility," which remain with family and in the home. Muslims in southern Thailand are generally socially conservative, and not given to major reevaluation of gender roles. Religious teachers mostly take the view that the Qur'an calls for men to assume positions of leadership in society, and for women to be subservient.

THE TABLIGHI MOVEMENT

A growing social force in the Thai Muslim community that was rooted in broader reformist tradition is that of the Tablighi Jama'at, an

Islamic grassroots dakwah ("call," "appeal," i.e., missionary) movement of South Asian origins that focuses more on purifying the Islamic community than on proselytising non-Muslims. While the missionary nature of Tablighi Jama'at activity belies the existence of a center, most of its activities are concentrated at the Markaz Dakwah Yala in the outskirts of Yala town.[65]

The Tablighi movement took root in southern Thailand in the 1960s. Jama'at (missionary groups) from Kota Bahrum, Malaysia, led by the son-in-law of Tablighi founder Muhammad Ilyas, visited Yala during this time and established the first Tablighi center there. The movement, however, only expanded noticeably in the 1980s.[66] Since then, adherents regularly travel throughout Muslim villages in the southern provinces preaching against traditional practices and in favor of their understanding of true Islam.[67] Markaz dakwah jama'at have been inspired by the travels of the Prophet in their endeavor to spread Islam's message throughout the region. Unlike the Malaysian dakwah movement that tends to target university communities, Tablighi Jama'at preachers in southern Thailand work primarily in rural communities. These Jama'at visit most, if not all, of the villages in the southern provinces at least once a week, typically approaching every household in the village. Leaders of the movement are locally recruited but educated in Pakistan. It is mostly these Pakistani-educated leaders who oversee groups of traveling preachers that undertake door-to-door preaching. They are also involved in organizing permanent preaching groups at local mosques called the *Masjidwar Jama'at.*

As is the case elsewhere in Southeast Asia, the Tablighi Jama'at in Thailand does not advocate an institutionalized track of formal education. Preaching in the various Tablighi centers and Jama'at Dakwah activities center on the key Tablighi text, *Tablighi Nisaab* (written by Maulana Zakariyyah Khandelwi). Lessons on *tahfiz al-Qur'an* are also conducted for younger members of the tablighi community. Beyond that, occasional lessons are conducted at the markaz that focus on polemics and debating skills in order to counter the missionary activities of Hindu and Christian missionaries. New Jama'at are also taught Urdu, the language of the global Tablighi Jama'at movement, in preparation for transborder Dakwah Tablighi activity.[68] Away from institutionalized Tablighi education however, it should be noted that many Jama'at are also teachers in SARs.[69]

The arrival of the Jama'at Tablighi has introduced tensions within the Muslim community in Thailand, particularly in the south. At its most obvious, dress has changed with the introduction of the white robes and turbans characteristic of the Tablighi movement. Differences also percolate beneath the surface between the Tablighi Jama'at and the Wahhabis. The latter have questioned the doctrinal authenticity and purity of the movement and criticized the Tablighis' use of Sufi techniques to instruct new recruits on meditation and self-control.[70] Beyond that, the Tablighi Jama'at have also been viewed with suspicion by mainstream Malay Sunnis. This is because of the pressure the Tablighi movement exerts on local communities by encouraging them to turn away from their age-old cultural traditions. Anthropologists have documented how these contentions have been expressed, for example, in the challenge that Jama'at pose to traditional authority, when younger, charismatic Jama'at indirectly challenge the stature of more senior teachers and imam in pondoks, SARs, and mosques.[71] It is also clear that the profile of the Tablighi Jama'at leadership in Thailand differs from the orthodox Malay-Muslim community: the former are usually educated in Pakistan while the latter have educational ties to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

In June 2004, the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand met with 156 pondok and SAR principals in Bangkok to discuss the future of Islamic education in Thailand. In the dialogue that ensued, religious teachers highlighted their desire to maintain the traditional focus on religious knowledge and practice as the cornerstone to Islamic education in Thailand. However, they also acknowledged the problems confronting Muslim education, namely, the need to find space in mainstream Thai education and provide their students with the necessary skills and qualifications to apply for higher education and employment. Their views speak to an awareness within southern Thailand's Muslim community of the need to transform Islamic education in a manner that facilitates the uplifting of local Malay-Muslim communities without compromising religious and moral education.

Attempts at educational reform, however, have not been without problems. The making and remaking of Islamic education policy by the central Thai government has historically met with resistance from

the Malay-Muslim community—resistance that on occasion has led to violence. To that effect, the current cycle of violence, insofar as it can be traced to Islamic schools, reflects long-standing grievances on the part of the Malay-Muslim community toward the state's assimilationist strategies. It is important to emphasize, however, that resistance by Malay-Muslim educators has typically taken the form of nonviolent negotiation and bargaining. Militancy has usually been the result of inflexible state policies, as occurred under the administrations of Phibun Songgkram and Sarit Thanarat. Moreover, it should be noted that Haji Sulong, the most popular Islamic scholar during the immediate postwar years, never responded to Phibun's attempts to subjugate the community during the late 1940s with calls for militancy or separatism.

While Islamic education has the potential to serve as a catalyst for change in Thai Muslim society, the cleavages that have emerged within the Muslim community itself complicate the path of educational reform. Competition between Middle East–influenced reformist and Wahhabi Islam, South Asian Tablighi Jama'at, and long-established Shafi'i-Sunnis has been particularly intense in the field of education. This competition has been expressed in the areas of school funding, organization, and curricula, as well as in mutual and sometimes bitter recriminations. Echoing the situation in many other Muslim societies, it appears that as Islamic education attempts to navigate the currents of tradition and modernity in southern Thailand, the question of "which Islam" defines creedal parameters may well prove an enduring contest for the majority of Thailand's Muslims.

NOTES

1. A sample of this literature would include Uthai Dulyakasem, "Education and Ethnic Nationalism: A Study of the Muslim-Malays of Southern Siam" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1981); Kanniga Sachakul, "Education as a Means for National Integration: Historical and Comparative Study of Chinese and Muslim Assimilation in Thailand" (Ph.D diss., University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, 1984); Surin Pitsuwan, *Islam and Malay Nationalism* (Bangkok: Thammasat University, Thai Khadi Research Institute, 1985); Andrew D. W. Forbes, ed., *The Muslims of Thailand,* 2 vols. (Bihar: Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, 1988); Raymond Scupin, ed., *Aspects of Development: Islamic Education in Thailand and Malaysia* (Bangi: Institut Bahasa Kesusasteraan

dan Kebudayaan Melayu, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1989); Mohd. Zamberi A. Malek, *Umat Islam Patani: Sejarah dan Politik* [The Islamic Community in Pattani: History and Politics] (Shah Alam: HIZBI, 1993); Ahmad Omar Capakia, *Politik dan Perjuangan Masyarakat Islam di Selatan Thailand, 1902–2002* [Politics and Resistance in the Islamic Community in Southern Thailand, 1902–2002] (Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2002).

2. Numan Hayimasae, "*Hj Sulong Abdul Kadir (1895–1954): Perjuangan dan Sumbangan Beliau Kepada Masyarakat Melayu Patani*" [Hj Sulong Abdul Kadir (1895–1954: His Struggle and Contribution to the Patani Malay Community] (M.Sc. diss., University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia, 2002), p. 85.

3. Pitsuwan, *Islam and Malay Nationalism,* p. 122.

4. Ibid., p. 194.

5. This exercise involved not only the registration of schools, but of all teachers and students as well, who had their family and personal background scrutinized. Interview with a Tok Guru, Saiburi Islam Wittaya School, Pattani, February 24, 2005.

6. Interview with an independent Malay-Muslim researcher, Pattani, January 17, 2005. It should be noted here that attending an Islamic school does not preclude attending a non-Islamic state school. In fact, while the numbers would be difficult to ascertain, the author does know of instances where Muslim students attend both Islamic and non-Islamic state schools at the same time.

7. Charles F. Keyes, *Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation-State* (Boulder, CO, and London: Westview Press, 1987), p. 131.

8. Interview with a senior administrator, College of Islamic Studies, PSU, in Yala on January 17, 2005.

9. Reference to this pondok can be found in Abdul Haleem Bashah, *Raja dan Dinasti Jembal dalam Patani Besar* [The Jembal Monarchy and Dynasty in Greater Patani] (Kelantan: Pustaka Reka, 1994).

10. Most congregate at Malay-speaking *Halaqah* (study circles) in Mecca's holy mosque as well as Medina University.

11. Hasan Madmarn, *The Pondok and Madrasah in Pattani* (Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2003), p. 66.

12. Interview with the secretary-general of the *Persatuan Sekolah Agama Rakyat* (Islamic Private School Association), Pattani, January 15, 2006.

13. Pitsuwan, *Islam and Malay Nationalism,* p. 179.

14. Raymond Scupin, "Education and Development for Muslims in Thailand," in Scupin, ed., *Aspects of Development,* p. 104.

15. Interview with an independent Malay-Muslim researcher, Pattani, January 17, 2005.

16. The term *sekolah agama rakyat,* or Islamic private school, has been used interchangeably with *madrasa* in the Malay-Muslim community of southern Thailand. For the purposes of uniformity, this study will primarily adopt the former, though reference will be made to the latter on occasion.

17. Hasan Madmarn, "The *Pondok* and Change in South Thailand," in Scupin, ed., *Aspects of Development,* p. 65.

18. Interview with a senior administrator of College of Islamic Studies, PSU at Yala, January 17, 2005.

19. Madmarn, *Pondok and Madrasah in Patani,* pp. 115–116.

20. Interview with a senior administrator, Yala Islamic College, Pattani, January 18, 2005.

21. To "call" or "invite." It refers to the duty of all Muslims to call mankind to Islam.

22. One SAR in Ranget, Narathiwat, Rahmaniah, is partially funded by the Arrahmah Islamic Foundation in the United Kingdom. Interview with a Tok Guru, Rahmaniah School, Narathiwat, February 27, 2005.

23. The purpose of the creation of the in-house foundation is to officially manage the administration, including finances, of the school.

24. Because of this, they retain their status as traditional pondoks, and are not categorized as either SARs or an Institute of Learning—pondok. Interview with officials at the Persatuan Pondok (Pondok Association), Pattani, January 18, 2005.

25. For example, new buildings at the Attarkiah Islamiah Institute, a large SAR in Narathiwat, were funded by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Iqraa Charitable Society, and the Islamic Development Bank. Interview with Tok Guru, Attarkiah Islamiah Institute, Narathiwat, February 24, 2005.

26. Interview with a senior administrator, Central Islamic Committee of Thailand, Bangkok, January 25, 2005.

27. Correspondence with a senior PSU academic, April 2, 2005.

28. See ibid. The academic also cited the example of a SAR in Narathiwat where thirty-one Tok Guru on staff had graduated from twenty-one different countries.

29. Interview with a Tok Guru, Sasanaksuksa Islahiyah School, Pattani, February 21, 2005. Wahhabism refers to the reformist Islamic movement traced to the eighteenth century, but which is associated today with the strict interpretation of Islam that claims to rely on the Qur'an as the sole source of knowledge and rejects all forms of innovation. The term "Wahhabism" comes from the name of its founder, Abdul I-Wahhab. Followers of this tradition do not use the term, as they deem it pejorative. Instead, they call themselves Muwahhidun. Shafi'i-Sunni refers to the Shafi'i school of Sunni Muslim jurisprudence, the dominant legal school in Southeast Asia.

30. R. L. Winzeler, "Traditional Islamic Schools in Kelantan," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (henceforth *JMBRAS*) 48, no. 1 (1964): 92.

31. The author was informed that Dewan Bahasa dan Pusaka [Institute of Language and Literature] in Malaysia has regularly been dispatching language teachers to southern Thailand on short-term assignments. Interview with a Malaysian Tok Guru, Narathiwat, April 26, 2005.

32. Bjørn Blengsli's chapter in this volume (Chap. 5) provides further information about the extent of Cambodian involvement in the Islamic education system in southern Thailand.

33. Most are Chinese students from Xinjiang, fluent in Arabic, though there are also a number of Malaysians, Cambodians, and Kazakhs. The school has also had an American and a Swedish student, both female, enrolled in recent times. Interview with a senior official, Yala Islamic College, Pattani, January 18, 2005.

34. The author was informed of this arrangement in the course of conversation with a prominent Thai-Malay-Muslim academic in DeKalb, Illinois, on April 5, 2005.

35. Iik A. Mansurnoor, "Intellectual Networking among Muslim Scholars in Southeast Asia with a Special Reference to Patani Works on Society, Coexistence and External Relations," paper presented at the First Inter-Dialogue Conference on Southern Thailand, Pattani, Thailand, June 13–15, 2002, p. 5.

36. Saroja Dorairajoo, "From Mecca to Yala: Negotiating Islam in Present-Day Southern Thailand," paper presented at the symposium Islam in Southeast Asia and China: Regional Faithlines and Faultlines in the Global Ummah, City University of Hong Kong, Nov. 28–Dec. 1, 2002, pp. 11–13.

37. See Virginia Matheson and M. B. Hooker, "Jawi Literature in Patani: The Maintenance of an Islamic Tradition," *JMBRAS* 61, no. 1 (1988): 14–15; "*Al-Ghazaly Modern Syekh Nawawi Al-Bantani,*" www.sufinews.com, April 8, 2004. See also Mohd. Noor bin Ngah, *Kitab Jawi: Islamic Thought of the Malay-Muslim Scholars* (Singapore: ISEAS, 1983).

38. See Peter Riddell, *Islam in the Malay-Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses.* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), pp. 199–200. See also Hasan Madmarn, "Traditional Muslim Institutions in Southern Thailand: A Critical Study of Islamic Education and Arabic Influence in the Pondok and Madrasah Systems of Patani" (Ph.D diss., University of Utah, 1990).

39. Ibrahim Narongraksakhet, "Developing Local-based Curriculum Guidelines for Islamic Private Schools in Southern Thailand" (Ph.D. diss., Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, July 2003), pp. 9–14.

40. These figures were determined over a range of interviews conducted in the southern provinces from January to April 2005.

41. Madmarn, *Pondok and Madrasah in Pattani,* p. 95.

42. Interview with a senior intelligence officer, Armed Forces Security Center, Bangkok, January 24, 2005.

43. Madmarn, *Pondok and Madrasah in Pattani,* p. 98.

44. This breakdown is based on interviews conducted with various religious teachers during the course of fieldwork from January to April 2005.

45. The traditionalists, however, had insisted that the language of the *Qur'an* and the *Khutbah* remain Arabic. The debate over translation and the *Khutbah* was won by the reformists. However, those were two of the rare victories for the reformists until more recently.

46. A random survey conducted by the author on thirty SARs in Pattani and Yala in January–February 2005 revealed that twelve headmasters were trained in Saudi Arabia or at YIC.

47. See Zahidi al-Helmi and Muhammad Jihad, "Rahasia dan Iktibar disebalik Kejatuhan Pondok" [Secrets and Contradictions behind the Failure of the Pondok], *Imam* 2 (December 1989): 34–37. Zahidi and Jihad identified some of the problems confronting the Pondok as a stagnant curriculum, lack of community spirit, and insufficient financial resources.

48. Hayimasae, *Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir,* p. 146.

49. There are obviously no official statistics of "Wahhabi" schools available. This range from 20 to 40 is estimated from the figures cited by religious teachers and scholars interviewed during the course of research.

50. Interview with an *ustaz,* Darunsat Wittaya School, Pattani, February 5, 2005.

51. Interview with an *ustaz,* Saiburi Islam Wittaya School, Pattani, February 24, 2005.

52. Interview with a senior official, Yala Islamic College, Pattani, January 18, 2005.

53. That said, I observed that, while Ismail Lutfi is an immensely popular and respected *alim* and his public lectures and *khutbah* attract audiences in the thousands, his pool of committed followers is significantly smaller. This reflects the fact that most Muslims in southern Thailand remain followers of traditional practices.

54. Interview with Ismail Lutfi, Pattani, January 14, 2006.

55. Ibid. In the course of my interview I had used the term "traditional Islam" to refer to the predominant Shafi'i-Sunni as well as Sufi Islam that continues to be widely practiced in southern Thailand.

56. Interview with a dean at the Yala Islamic College, Pattani, January 15, 2006.

57. See, for example, John Bradley, "Waking Up to the Terror Threat in Southern Thailand," *Straits Times,* May 27, 2004; Zachary Abuza, "A Conspiracy of Silence: Who is Behind the Escalating Insurgency in Southern Thailand?" *Terrorism Monitor* vol. 3, issue 9, May 6, 2005, p. 3.

58. I would like to thank Muhammad Haniff Hassan for alerting me to this fact. For information about Shaykh Said Hawwa, see Al Mustasyar Abdullah al Aqil, "Mengenang Said Hawwa" [Remembering Said Hawwa], www.boemi-islam.com, May 27, 2004.

59. Ismail Lutfi Fatani, *Ikhtilaf Ad-Darain wa Atsaruhu fi Ahkam Al-Munakahat wa Al-Muamalat* [The Effect of Two Dars [Dar Al-Islam and Dar Al-Harb] on Islamic Personal and Transaction Laws] (Cairo: Dar As-Salam, Cairo, 1990).

60. Interview with Pakorn Priyakorn, Secretary-General, Islamic Centre of Thailand, Bangkok, January 18, 2006.

61. Although Wahhabi Islam played a special role in the establishment of the nation-state of Qatar and the coming to power of its ruling family—Al-Thani—in the early 1970s, it has been used primarily as a legitimizing ideology rather than enforced as a way of life.

62. Interview at Asia Foundation Thailand Office, Bangkok, January 17, 2006.

63. Salafism—the belief in returning to the ways of the Prophet and the three generations of followers after him—is often conflated with Wahhabism. But Wahhabism is but one among several variants of Salafism.

64. See, for example, Ismail Lutfi, "Penyebaran Ilmu Salafi Khususnya Penulis Syeikh Muhammad Abdul Wahab" [The Expansion of Salafi Knowledge in the Writings of Syeikh Muhammad Abdul Wahab], paper presented at Seminar Antarabangsa Syeikh Muhammad Abdul Wahab [International Seminar on Syeikh Muhammad Abdul Wahab], Perlis, Malaysia, March 16–17, 2006.

65. The immense Markaz Dakwah Yala may arguably be the largest of its kind in Asia. Tablighi members insist that the funding for the Markaz has come from *zakat* and contributions from pilgrims from throughout the world who have visited the Markaz.

66. Alexander Horstmann, "The Tablighi Jama'at in Southern Thailand," paper presented at the Ninth International Conference on Thai Studies, Dekalb, Illinois, April 3–6, 2005, p. 11.

67. The author was informed by Alexander Horstmann that the Thai chapter of the Tablighi Jama'at might have as many as 200,000 members. In light of the nature of the Tablighi movement, it is of course difficult to verify this number.

68. Horstmann, "The Tablighi Jama'at in Southern Thailand," p. 15.

69. Interview with a Tok Guru, Sasanu Patam School, Pattani, February 14, 2005.

70. Dietrich Reetz, "Sufi Spirituality Fires Reformist Zeal: The Tablighi Jamaat in Today's India and Pakistan," paper presented to the workshop titled "Modern Adaptations of Sufi-Islam," Berlin, April 4–5, 2003.

71. Horstmann,"The Tablighi Jama'at in Southern Thailand," pp. 24–25.

5 MUSLIM METAMORPHOSIS
ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY CAMBODIA

BJØRN ATLE BLENGSLI

In May 2003 Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, was arrested in Ajutthaya, Thailand. The police accused him of masterminding the terrorist attack in Bali in October 2002 and directing a Southeast Asian affiliate of al-Qa'ida, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). According to a U.S. FBI report dated February 25, 2004, Hambali entered Cambodia in September 2002 and left in February 2003. This disclosure quickly led to the arrest and trial of a number of foreign Muslims. Eventually, twenty-eight teachers at a school in Kandal province, financed and operated by the Saudi charity Umm al-Qura, were expelled from Cambodia.[1] Hambali and two of his associates were given life prison sentences in absentia. Three teachers, two Thais from the Umm al-Qura school and one Cambodian substitute teacher from the Kuwait-run Revival of Islamic Heritage Foundation (RIHS),[2] were also arrested and sentenced to life in jail in Cambodia.

Information from what seem to be several interrogations at Camp Delta (Guantanamo) indicates that Hambali had indeed intended to

use Cambodia as an operational base for a series of assaults against sensitive Western targets in the Southeast Asia region and Europe.[3] Before Hambali's arrest, most Muslim Cambodians denied any knowledge of terrorists hiding in the country. However, recent information gathered by my Cambodian assistant, Aly Sary, and me confirms that quite a few Muslims knew of his whereabouts, and a few had even made Hambali's acquaintance.[4]

The official Cambodian response to the terrorists was firm. U.S. researcher Noy Thrupkaew quoted Prime Minister Hun Sen as saying the arrests were "like taking a bomb out of our house." She went on to say that the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh began monitoring the Umm al-Qura compound in 2000 and believed that the staff of the foundation was recruiting Cambodians for terrorist activities. She quoted an unnamed U.S. official who said these Cambodians were told that they were being sent on pilgrimages to Mecca or to schools in Pakistan[5] or Egypt, but once they left Cambodia, they were instead forced into terrorist training camps.

I cannot confirm Thrupkaew's claims, but I have identified former Cambodian students from Karachi's Jamia Binoria madrasah and Abu Bakar Islamic University; the latter is also confirmed by Pakistan's *Daily Times* newspaper.[6] Many Cambodian Muslims believe that the government was pressured by the U.S. Embassy to close the Umm al-Qura school, and that the trial was a sham.

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the history of modern Islamic education in Cambodia and the differentiation and discord that have marked that education. In the course of research for this chapter, two research assistants and I visited thirty-two of Cambodia's most developed religious schools, including one teacher-training center. In 2005–2006, a total of 4,053 boys and 2,812 girls attended these schools. The team conducted 316 in-depth interviews with students, 68 percent of whom were between sixteen and nineteen years old. In addition, we conducted a population census. Our census showed that in 2005, there were 417 Muslim-majority villages in Cambodia with 244 mosques and 313 *suraos* (prayer houses). There were also 60,342 Muslim families and a total Muslim population of 320,854 at this time.

This chapter will start with a short overview of the varieties of Cambodian Muslims. Then I will briefly discuss the historical ties between Cambodian Muslims and Muslims in the Malay Peninsula and

southern Thailand, and present an overview of the first movement of Islamic reform in Cambodia. I will then discuss the situation for Muslims under the Khmer Rouge regime (April 17, 1975, to January 7, 1979).The next section of the chapter deals with the period before and after UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority of Cambodia, February 1992–September 1993) and the arrival of the Jama'ah Tabligh, or Dakwah Tabligh as they are called in Cambodia.

The country's first free elections, held from May 23 to 28, 1993, marked the beginning of a new era of openness in Cambodia. The elections were followed by an unprecedented increase in religious competition, a key index of which was a rapid growth in the number of Islamic schools. Today there are three primary Muslim school networks in Cambodia, each of which propagates different traditions of knowledge and piety.

This chapter emphasizes that Muslim education and society in contemporary Cambodia is no longer being shaped by local actors alone. Today's plurality of actors and visions has created a struggle for the heart and soul of Cambodian Islam, a struggle that takes on particular force in the country's Islamic schools. Cambodia's Muslim schools are less sophisticated than their Malaysian or Thai counterparts, but the growth of modern schooling has stimulated a process of religious *objectification* similar to that seen in many other parts of the Muslim world, centered on the effort to articulate a fixed, canonical, and modular set of beliefs similar to those presented in school textbooks.

Cambodia's Muslim minority is arguably the most rapidly changing in Southeast Asia, and one of the fastest changing in the entire Muslim world. The evidence suggests that, at present, the changes taking place are playing to the favor of conservative Islamist or "fundamentalist" variants of Islam.[7]

VARIETIES OF ISLAM

If we overlook the country's tiny Ahmadi community,[8] most Cambodian Muslims consider themselves Shafi'i Sunnis, followers of the Shafi'i school of Sunni law, the dominant legal school across Southeast Asia. Equally important, however, most indigenous Muslims in Cambodia come from one of two different ethnic groups, the Cham and the Chvea.

The Cham themselves are internally differentiated into different subcommunities. A small subgroup of Cham, the Imam San, see themselves as keepers of ancient Cham rituals and language, though today they blend this older Islamic heritage with more modern traditions of knowledge. The major difference between the Imam San and other Muslims, which the Imam San call Chvea, is that the Imam San identify themselves as descendants of an encapsulated and pristine culture, which, they believe, characterized the ancient kingdom of *Champa* in coastal Vietnam. The Imam San are also known as the Jahed, Cham Bani, Cham Sot, and sometimes the Kom Jumaat ("the Friday group")—the latter owing to their preference for praying only once a week rather than five times a day. The Imam San have their own politico-religious leader in the person of Ukhna[9] Khnour Kay Toam. He is the Imam San equivalent of the mainstream Sunni community's grand mufti. His official title, *On g'nur,* is the title conferred upon him by the Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs in 1998.[10]

Excluding a few villages in Kampot province, one village in Kandal province, and minority communities in two villages in Beanteay Meanchey province, the Imam San leadership estimates that they have thirty-three mosques serving a total population of 37,800, or just over 10 percent of the Cambodian Muslim population in thirty-four villages in three provinces—Kampong Chhnang, Pursat, and Battambang. However, my assistants and I found that the number of Imam San villages in these three provinces was thirty-two in 2005—that is, eleven in Kampong Chhnang, nine in Pursat, and twelve in Battambang. Three of the villages in Battambang had started to pray five times a day instead of the traditional once a week.[11]

The small Imam San subcommunity excepted, the two dominant or mainstream groups of Muslims in Cambodia are the Cham and the Chvea. Although similar in their religious and cultural views, Cham and Chvea Muslims tend not to live in the same villages because they speak different languages and regard themselves as ethnically distinct. Sometimes Chvea Muslims refer to themselves as Cham, when that label is used loosely to mean Cambodian Muslim. William Collins comments on the latter practice, although he states that the most common label is *Khmer Islam* (Islamic Khmer). This, he argues, is because Khmer Islam is a name that avoids the stigma of foreignness and taps the positive valence of former King Sihanouk's terminology.[12]

My research, however, indicates that most Cambodian Muslims do not like to refer themselves as Khmer Islam.

Cham immigrants came to Cambodia from Champa, in what is now central Vietnam, beginning their migration in the late fifteenth century after a series of military defeats at the hands of Vietnamese invaders.[13] Upon arriving in Cambodia the Cham encountered an already established community of Malays: the Chvea (Jva). According to Mak Phoun, the Chvea were the descendants of immigrants who had come from the Indonesian archipelago and the Malay Peninsula in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[14] The French researcher Marcel Ner has also identified these Chvea Muslims as descendants of immigrants from Minangkabau (in Sumatra), Kelantan (in Malaysia), and Patani (in southern Thailand). These "Malays," according to Ner, played an essential role in pushing the Cambodian Muslim community toward greater Islamic orthodoxy.[15] Today we can find Chvea settlements in Battambang, Siem Reap, and a few communities in Pursat and Kampong Chhnang provinces, but the heaviest concentrations are in Koh Kong, Sihanoukville, Kampot, and Takeo. A significant proportion of Phnom Penh's Muslims are also Chvea.

The Chvea community has always had ties to the Malay community in southern Thailand and Malaysia. The French researcher Mathieu Guerin writes that the Malay-Cambodian Muslim connections go back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but states that connections are first attested after the beginning of the nineteenth century.[16] It looks as though itinerant Malay and Thai ulama became more active in the early twentieth century. William Collins mentions Patani ulama fleeing Thai suppression[17] (probably after Patani was annexed by Siam as part of the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909), while Guering mentions an increasing number of Cambodian students in southern Thailand and Malaysia in the 1930s.[18]

Classical Islamic texts (kitab kuning, see Chap. 1, this volume) from Thailand and Malaya stimulated a transition from what had been a rather syncretic to a more normative Islam broadly similar to that practiced in neighboring parts of mainland Southeast Asia. The Malay language and Malay interpretations of Islam have continued to influence Islam in Cambodia to the present day.

Cham and Chvea recognize the same supreme religious leader in the office of the mufti. A mufti is a religious scholar who serves

both as a legal and religious adviser by issuing *fatawa* (legal opinions) to Islamic judges (*qadis*) or private individuals. In Cambodia, the mufti also serves as the Muslim community's supreme leader. According to Ysa Osman, the mufti is appointed by the country's most powerful leader.[19] His duties are, among other things, to educate people as to correct Islamic practices and to provide guidance for the network of religious leaders (imams) who operate at the provincial and district level. The mufti also guides the village religious leaders, known in Cambodia as *hakem.* The current mufti is Ukhna Kamaruddin bin Yusof; he was appointed in 1996. He has had only one predecessor, Raja Thipadei Res Lah (Imam Haji Res Lah), who was Cambodia's first grand mufti. Res Lah was appointed mufti by Norodom Sihanouk in 1960. However, he continued after the coup d'état in 1970 and was later killed by the Khmer Rouge.[20] Kamaruddin bin Yusof completed his term in 2000. However, rather than stand down, he negotiated with the country's prime minister, Hun Sen, and received a permanent position as mufti of Cambodia.

Cambodia has three levels of imams: (1) the *imam khaet,* a provincial religious leader; (2) the *imam srok,* a district religious leader; and (3) the hakem and imams in the village. Each village usually has between six and ten imams who are supervised by the hakem. The latter is either elected or appointed by the mufti, and he usually has two deputies with village elders as advisers. The hakem's role is to educate villagers on religious rites and advise and warn those who break those rites. He also serves as a judge in village quarrels, but more important, he often acts as a politico-religious intermediary for the mufti and hence for the ruling Cambodian Peoples Party (CPP) at the village level.

This official, quasi-bureaucratic Islamic structure is not an old tradition but a modern remnant from the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) period (1979–1989). Led by the former Khmer Rouge Muslim Math Ly, Muslim society enjoyed a rapid rebirth under the post–Pol Pot, PRK regime. The PRK government saw an opportunity to control Cambodia's Muslims and use Khmer Rouge injustices against the Muslims as a way to distinguish themselves from the Khmer Rouge. The government thus gave Muslims greater religious freedom, but it simultaneously placed both the hakems and the village chiefs (*mephum*) firmly under PRK control. The new communist authorities reviewed these leaders' personal biographies before they granted them formal recognition.[21]

CHANGING TIMES

Across the Muslim world, European colonization and the rapid socioeconomic change it ushered in gave rise to strong efforts to renew and reform the practice of Islam. The changes also led to a vigorous exploitation of new print technologies by Muslim scholars. In Cambodia, these developments broadened the horizons of local Muslims and deepened their sense of connection to the wider Islamic world. As travel became quicker and easier in the early twentieth century, growing numbers of Cambodian Muslims traveled to Malaysia and South Thailand. After their stay in South Thailand or Malaysia, some of these travelers went on to make the pilgrimage (*hajj*). A few of these early pilgrims extended their stay in Mecca for further religious study. The French researcher Jean Delvert suggested that by 1940 as many as five hundred Cambodian Muslims had made the pilgrimage to Mecca.[22]

The First Transition

Malay Muslim influence, palpable still today in Cambodia, increased significantly during the first decades of the twentieth century. Marcel Ner has observed that growing numbers of Cambodian Muslims went abroad for religious education, especially after the establishment of the French Protectorate (1863–1953).[23]

A combination of itinerant Malay ulama and returned pilgrims and students brought about new trends in Islamic education in Cambodia. Students became familiar with textbooks written by religious thinkers from southern Thailand and the Malay Peninsula. One of these thinkers, Imam Nawawi of Banten, wrote *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis) and commentaries on various works of classical Islamic scholarship, known as *kitabs.* Nawawi's work is still widely read in Cambodia. After World War II, some of the returned pilgrims and students established new religious schools. Although Cambodia had long had simple, village-based Qur'anic schools, these new schools were different. They had fixed curricula and printed books. The new schools taught *tasawwuf* (Islamic mysticism), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *hadith* (written traditions of the Prophet Muhammad), and *nahu* (Arabic grammar and syntax), in addition to Malay language. The continuing emphasis on Malay reflected the fact that Cambodian Muslims lacked a written tradition in the Cham language.

These new trends in Islamic education can be traced back to Haji Sam Sou from Battambang. In 1948, he established what is generally thought to be Cambodia's first formal religious school. Even though his school was primitive by today's standards, it led to the establishment of a network of similar schools. The curricula in these schools were comparable to those of the traditional Islamic boarding schools, or *pondok,* found in southern Thailand and the Malay Peninsula. These new, Malay-inspired schools would dominate Cambodia's Muslim education for the next generation.

I have found few written sources with information related to school curricula from this period. However, we conducted interviews with elders in the Takeo and the Kandal province.[24] Our informants were from seventy-eight to ninety years old, and the information they provided directed us to existing schools that still share common traits with schools from that period. The best example of a school in touch with this aspect of the Muslim community's past is the Ma'had al-Muhajirin al-Islami Pusat Pengajian Agama dan Arab in the Kampong Som province. This is a pondok boarding school much like those in Thailand or Malaysia. Works by Muhammad bin Ismael and Muhammad bin Daud from Patani, in addition to Imam Nawawi of Banten, are among the texts most commonly used in *fiqh* and *hadith* classes.

The new schools taught a reformed understanding of Islam in order to shape a new and clear Muslim identity in the face of a westernized bureaucracy, educational system, and civil life. Increasingly separated from the majority Khmer population and their French rulers, Islamic schools taught Islamic brotherhood and selflessness. A typical day at school started with reciting the lessons from the previous day and continued with the teachers reading aloud new passages from the Qur'an or various classical religious texts (*kitabs*). Students repeated the reading and recitation of these texts until they got them right. This pattern of learning is not very different from the style of most religious education today, including that of Khmer Buddhists. Students memorize what the teacher tells them; little emphasis is placed on understanding or exegesis. This style of pedagogy is consistent with old-school Islamic traditions of learning. Dr. Zatar Alam quotes the Islamic thinker al-Ghazali when he says that the learner is a patient and the teacher his physician: "The teacher knows the mental level of his students. He decides accordingly as to what should

be taught and what should not be taught. Posing unnecessary questions and speaking without permission create difficulties in the pursuit of knowledge."[25] Though this might be regarded as a conservative approach to Islamic learning and contrary to modern educational programs in many Muslim countries, it is still the prevalent pattern in Cambodian education. For the most part students are passive and it is assumed that teachers know everything pupils need to learn. However, in other sectors of Cambodia's Islamic school system, this pattern is gradually changing.

The Second Transition

In the mid-1950s Cambodia's Shafi'i Sunni majority was still predominantly traditionalist and little disposed to religious reform. The Kaum Muda was a modernist movement that arrived in Cambodia from the Malay world during these years. Kaum Muda, the "young" or "new group," had been active in the Malay Peninsula since the early twentieth century. The movement took up principles proposed by the influential Egyptian reformer Muhammad Abduh, as well as other Muslim reformists, and strongly criticized the country's traditionalists, known here as in Malaya as the Kaum Tua, the "old group."

As in the Malay Peninsula, the Muda reformists strongly disagreed with what they described as locally engendered rituals and interpretations, as well as the use of questionable hadith. The reformists and the traditionalists also disagreed over the propriety of a variety of rites of passage related to birth, marriage, and death. The reformists denounced the veneration of local spirits and ancestors, as well as such traditionalist Islamic practices as the *tahlil* (repetitions acknowledging the singularity of God) and *takbir* declarations of God's greatness (*Allahu Akbar*).

In Cambodia, the Muda group's reform movement was initiated by Tuon Ly Musa and Haji Math (later called Muhammad India). Tuon Ly Musa had studied in Kelantan, Malaysia, for six years and may have also spent time in India. He returned to Cambodia during the Second World War.[26] In the 1950s, Musa founded a school in Svay Khleang village in the Krauch Chhmar district of the Kampong Cham province. The school attracted students from all over Cambodia. The mufti of that time, Raja Thipadei Res Lah, claimed that the Muda reformists were creating social unrest and polarizing the Muslim community. Families

were divided, congregations split, and in a few instances physical conflict broke out. Because of these problems, the reformists' school building program ground to a halt. Its religious and ideological influence survived, however. Indeed, the cultural category of "young" and "old" groups is still widely used in Cambodia. Although academically inaccurate, the term *Muda* is today used to describe the country's new and Saudi-influenced Salafi movement (see below) while the term *Tua* is applied to the country's Shafi'i Sunni majority. Cambodia's movement for Islamic renewal came to a halt during the civil war that gave rise to the Khmer Rouge and the Democratic Kampuchea regime.

DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

Cambodia's communist movement had its roots in the Khmer Issarak anti-French national movement of the 1940s. The Communist Party was not established until the early 1950s, and the movement underwent a transformation when French-educated intellectuals like Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, Khieu Samphan, and their associates began to influence it. In 1963, most of the Communist Party's central committee fled to the remote province of Ratanak Kiri. From there they led several unsucessful attempts at armed insurgency. Their fortunes changed in 1968, when they began to receive assistance from Vietnam's communists.

After a coup d'état toppled him in 1970, Sihanouk founded the National United Front of Kampuchea (Front Uni National du Kampuchéa or FUNK) from his exile in Beijing. The Chinese brokered a coalition with the communists, and on May 5, 1970, the Royal Government of National Union of Kampuchea (GRUNK) was established. GRUNK gained popular support in the Cambodian countryside, and by 1973 the movement controlled most of Cambodia. On April 17, 1975, GRUNK forces captured Phnom Penh. Within days the victorious forces had emptied Cambodia's cities of their citizens. Former regime soldiers, the middle class, intellectuals, doctors, artists, and others believed to be connected to the old regime quickly "disappeared."

Estimates of the number of people who perished under the Democratic Kampuchea regime (April 1975–January 1979) range from one to three million. The period was horrific for all Cambodians, but many scholars believe that Cambodia's Muslim minority suffered more than the Buddhist majority. The Cambodia historian Ben Kiernan and Muslim scholar Ysa Osman disagree on the number of Muslims killed

during this era, but agree in stating that more Muslims suffered than Buddhists. Kiernan estimated that 250,000 Muslims lived in Cambodia before the war,[27] while Osman put the figure at 700,000.[28] This discrepancy led Kiernan to conclude that approximately 90,000 Muslims perished; Osman's figure is 400,000–500,000.

Osman's estimate, especially regarding the number of Muslims living in Cambodia before Democratic Kampuchea, has been disputed by some Cambodian scholars, but he is supported by the Cambodian grand mufti and several people from the Muslim leadership.[29] There are, however, reasons to doubt these numbers. For example, the mufti claims that there are 510,000 Muslims living in Cambodia today. Osman states that there is no reason to doubt this figure's accuracy.[30] The survey I conducted in 2005 came up with a population estimate approximately 200,000 lower than the mufti's number. This indicates that more research is needed on the topic.

Although scholars disagree about details, research by Kiernan, Osman, Gregory Stanton, and me confirms that most Muslims believe they were persecuted either because of their race or their religion. Kiernan observes that, with their large villages, distinct language and culture, and independent national organizations, Muslims were considered a threat to the communist leadership and its policy of collectivization. As early as 1974, Muslims were seen as an obstacle to these plans. Kiernan quotes the "Decisions Concerning the Line on Cooperatives of the Party in Region 31." This is a Northern Zone Khmer Rouge document dated February 1974 that states: "Concerning fraternal Islamic Khmer, delay having them join (cooperatives); but in the meantime, go ahead and organize them into mutual aid teams. However, it is necessary to break up this group to some extent; do not allow too many of them to concentrate in one area." According to Kiernan, this is the earliest record of the Communist Party's intention to disperse Muslims.[31]

In September 1975 there were Muslim rebellions both in Koh Pal and in Ly Musa's home village, Svay Khleang in the Kampong Cham province. Both rebellions were crushed and the Khmer Rouge suppression of Muslims intensified.[32] Muslim names, customs, and religious practices were forbidden. The death penalty was imposed for speaking Cham, Malay, or Arabic. Copies of the Qur'an and *kitabs* were burned. Religious dress was prohibited, and Muslims were required to eat pork.

Muslim teachers, *hakems,* and elders were summarily executed. In an interview with Ysa Osman, today's mufti, Ukhna Kamaruddin bin Yusof, said that at a meeting in Bos Khnaor village in Kampong Cham province he overheard Khmer Rouge officials say that the biggest enemy was the Cham. He also claims that he later read a book titled the *Advanced Cooperative Plan* that stated all Muslims had to be eliminated before 1980.[33]

The Khmer Rouge divided the entire Cambodian population into distinct categories with different rights and responsibilities. One category was called the "base people." These people, who theoretically had full rights, were recognized as having had no ties to the earlier Lon Nol regime. It was people from this group who became chairmen of cooperatives. Because most Muslims lived in the countryside, one would expect that most would have been classified as belonging to this group. Instead Muslims were classified as *dépositée,* that is, deportable base people (*moultan phñae*). This was a term that predated the 1975 evacuation of Phnom Penh,[34] suggesting that the classification was originally intended for Cham, for racial reasons rather than as an indication of their geographical relocation. Under the Khmer Rouge, then, Muslims were dispersed and families were split up.

Although non-Muslim Khmer also experienced great suffering, Muslims appear to have been even more frequently victimized by the policy. Empty Muslim villages were filled with non-Muslim Khmer. Osman claims that by the end of the Democratic Kampuchea era only five mosques remained in the entire country; only thirty-eight teachers survived, and just twenty *hakems.* He estimates the surviving Muslim population at 138,000–200,000.[35]

We can disagree about numbers of Muslims in Cambodia both before and after Khmer Rouge, but if mass murder for a political objective can be referred to as genocide, the term certainly applies to the treatment of Cambodia's Muslims. However, more substantial evidence of intent must be found. What is clear is that Muslim society in Cambodia was in shambles by 1979 and ripe for Muslim proselytizers from abroad.

ISLAMIC REBIRTH

Islam enjoyed an immediate rebirth under the People's Republic of Kampuchea regime (1979–1989). However, religious freedom did

not come without costs. The new regime saw an opportunity to control Muslims and to use Khmer Rouge injustice against Muslims as a way to distinguish the new government's policies from those of the Khmer Rouge.

With the collapse of the Khmer Rouge regime, Cambodia's Muslims began to receive some help from outside donors, primarily from Malaysia. A few Malaysian missionaries also started to visit some of Cambodia's Muslim provinces, but the help they provided was as yet limited. Nonetheless, the situation changed dramatically when the Central Committee of the Vietnamese Communist Party decided to withdraw from Cambodia in 1989. This paved way for the State of Cambodia (SOC), with its emphasis on Buddhism and religious freedom. Cambodia's Muslims began to receive assistance from Muslim countries in the region. Much of this help continued to be directed toward religious reconstruction and refugee work. Printed in Malaysia, Arab textbooks like the *muqadimma* were distributed to many of Cambodia's rural Qur'anic schools. The muqadimma is a 64-page primer that starts with *surah* Al-Fatihah and continues with a selection of *surah* including An-Nas and An-Naba. Instructions on prayer and ablution are also included in the book.

Tablighi Jama`at

The Tablighi Jama'at, or Dakwah Tabligh as it is called in Cambodia, was introduced to Cambodia in 1989. Together with the leader of the Dakwah Tabligh in Southeast Asia during these years, Yusof Khan, a Cambodian Muslim, Imam Suleiman Ibrahim, founded the Cambodian branch of this missionary organization.[36] Three years after their arrival the Tablighis had established the Al Hida Yah hafiz school in Trea village in the Kampong Cham province. The school and, later, Cambodia's biggest mosque were funded with Malaysian and American help, largely from the Cambodian refugee community in those two countries. Not as involved in educational development as other aid groups, the Tablighis hoped to use missionary appeal to re-Islamize Cambodian Muslim society. To this end, today there is a small network of schools loosely affiliated with the group. The schools teach a curriculum based on Dakwah Tabligh principles. The movement has also influenced schools not otherwise affiliated with it.

The Jama'at Tabligh is a Muslim missionary and revival movement that was established in British India in the late 1920s. The movement is usually seen as quietist and apolitical, but that does not necessarily mean that its supporters are politically inactive.[37] In Cambodia, the movement's leader, Imam Suleiman Ibrahim, is accused by many of having close ties with several high-ranking Muslims in the ruling Cambodian People's Party. William Collins notes that the Dakwah Tabligh has gained support from "old group" traditionalists (Kaum Tua).[38] He believes that this cooperation occurs because the Tablighis emphasize Islamic learning and international connection with a worldwide Islamic brotherhood, emphases that appeal to traditionalists. It is important to note, too, that the Tablighis reform the content of Cambodian Sunnism by patient proselytizing instead of angry and impudent criticism.

Spokesmen for the movement claim that it has no organized structure. They say that the movement's rapid growth can be attributed to the pious Muslims who have created independent Dakwah Tabligh groups in most of Cambodia's provinces and cities. These itinerant Tablighi groups work tirelessly to spread the true message to Cambodia's Muslims. However, it is clear that the movement is not entirely lacking in centralized organization. The Cambodian Tablighis have organized several mass gatherings that have drawn thousands of Cambodians and hundreds of international supporters. Significant among these was the first gathering in 1997 in Chroy Metry, in the Kandal province, which attracted 25,000 participating Tabligh supporters from many countries. Since then, most of the gatherings have taken place in Kampong Cham's Trea village. The 2006 gathering attracted more than 20,000 participants, including some 150 to 200 foreigners. In 2007 the event drew close to 20,000 people, with 200 foreign participants. Surprisingly, these gatherings attract more participants from southern Thailand than from Malaysia. In 2007, no fewer than 32 *amirs*[39] from Malaysia participated, 18 from India, 132 from Thailand, 4 from Indonesia, 6 from Jordan, 5 from Singapore, 3 from Vietnam, and 1 from New Zealand. In 2006, Algeria, Oman, and France were represented in addition to the countries mentioned above.

When asked about their impact at the national level, the leaders of the Dakwah Tabligh in Cambodia downplay their influence, while the movement's grassroots activists tend to overestimate it. The

Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs also tends to underestimate it. My research reveals that some Muslims believe that as many as 30 percent of Cambodia's Muslims have been influenced by the movement. Whatever the precise figure, the movement is experiencing a steady growth in followers.

While the movement avoids taking political stands, its message may be interpreted as political. In April 2007 a visiting Malaysian *amir* told me:

> I have visited many countries, even [the] USA. . . . All Muslims should perform all daily prayers in the mosque because a prayer with congregation is granted a reward twenty-seven times more meritorious than a prayer performed alone. . . and all good Muslims should conduct missionary work for forty days each year and three days each month and we should not forget Allah for a single moment. . . . You see, it's simple; there is only one way that will secure a place in the afterlife. And there is only one correct interpretation of Islam. Not even the Saudis are all good Muslims. . . . When a Muslim leaves his home to see another Muslim, seventy thousand angels see him off, and all of them bless him with the mercy of Allah.

The *amir* thought Khmer society polluted Muslims with its hunger for modernization, materialism, shameless women, and alcohol and tobacco advertising. His solution was more gender segregation and intensified proselytizing.

Dakwah meetings are meticulously organized. Foreign Muslims are provided with separate living areas where they also have several seminars named after the countries of their sponsors—thus the Jama'at Malay (Malay community), Jama'at Thai, or Arab sunna. The seminars are not forums for discussions but groups where someone tells someone else what to think and believe. It also appears as though foreign ulama are more popular than Cambodians, a fact that is consistent with the Cambodian belief that true knowledge comes from outside experts. Between dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening prayer, preachers address sermons to a devoted audience.

Cambodian Muslim students from foreign educational institutions work as translators of languages such as Urdu, Arab, and Malay.

They come from *Deobandi* schools in Karachi or Islamabad; similar schools in India; universities in Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Egypt; and schools in Malaysia and South Thailand. Most of them share an unwillingness to talk about their schools and their curricula.

Cambodia's Salafi Movement

The Wahhabi-influenced Salafi movement views the Kaum Muda as their precursors. At a Salafi teacher training center in Russei Keo commune, Phnom Penh, I was told: "Wahhabi is the old Muhammad law from Allah, and Ly Musa came from Thailand to Cambodia in 1943 in order to proselytize the correct religion. At that time, all Cham disagreed with Musa, but these days almost all Cham follow his teachings. Musa worked the good way; he even initiated new schools for proper religious education. The traditionalists did not like the internal trouble among the Cham, and they complained to the government that Musa's preaching's split families and villages."[40]

Cambodia's new Salafi movement has been sponsored by an organization known as the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS). This is a Kuwait-based charity with branch offices in many countries where Muslims live. The RIHS's stated mission is to improve the condition of the Muslim community and to develop awareness of Islam among Muslims and non-Muslims. The organization has focused on large-scale development projects and mosque building. It has also developed a network of boarding schools targeting, among others, orphans. The RIHS schools teach a version of Islam that is supposed to be uncontaminated by local culture. When culture and religion no longer have a relationship a *deterritorialized* religion evolves, and this is what the RIHS teaches its students.

The RIHS arrived in Cambodia in the mid-1990s, and was soon followed by another Salafi organization financed by Saudi sources and emphasizing a similar interpretation of Islam. The latter was the Umm al-Qura Charitable Organization, the organization that was shut down in 2003 after allegations of involvement in terrorist activities.

The RIHS has been criticized for establishing itself in countries where turbulence and government corruption prevail and where there is no historical tradition of Salafi worship. From their headquarters at the Maahad Aseah Albani Rohimahullah Center in Cham Chao commune outside of Phnom Penh, the RIHS has built an organization that has

inspired envy and fear among other Muslim leaders. In the beginning spokespersons for the organization were self-assertive, even insolent, when they talked about the Shafi'i Sunni majority. They claimed that Muslim believers of the "old style" Shafi'i sect did not follow true Islamic teachings. Though they modified their attacks on devious Islamic practices after September 11, 2001, Salafi activists continue to clash with the majority Sunni Shafi'i in the countryside.

With their annual budget of $568,000 (in 2005),[41] the RIHS was also seen as a threat by Muslims in the ruling political party. In 2002, Cambodia's mufti said the following: "Before the Pol Pot regime we had only two branches of Islam. We had custom and the religion mixed together and we had the branch which follows Champa.…In 1993 we got the new religion from Arabia. When it came, the believers of the new religion accused all Muslims…of having a religion which was no good. Only the Arab group is good."[42]

The mufti had the support of Cambodia's ruling political party and many other prominent Muslims. Their outrage at the Salafi message forced the RIHS to modify its statements. From their headquarters at the Maahad Aseah Albani Rohimahullah Center, which is also the country's largest boarding school, several RIHS religious teachers told me the following:

> We have learned that coming here to (proselytize) ultimately leads to conflict and we want to avoid conflicts. We have seen that being labeled Wahhabi or Salafi easily leads to misunderstandings and difficulties. We want to avoid that in a small community like the Cham. We focus on a harmonious future at the moment. We had some problems with the Dakwah Tabligh in the past, so we had to say we follow the same book. We also build schools and wells in order to stop the misunderstandings. Unlike the Umm al-Qura, which wanted to strictly follow the Prophet Muhammad and Muhammad Ibn al-Wahhab, RIHS is more pragmatic.[43]

As late as 2006, religious conflict in the Kampong Cham, Kandal, Phnom Penh, Takeo, Kampot, and Koh Kong provinces forced the national Muslim leadership to intervene. The leadership ruled that in order to become a hakem or imam, one must belong to the ruling

political party. By the end of 2006 there were political threats and talk of purges against the RIHS and the country's Salafis.[44] The dispute ended with the RIHS making a pledge of loyalty to the authorities; most of the organization's leaders also joined the ruling Cambodian People's Party. In spite of this accommodation, disturbances, sometimes violent, still erupt in the countryside. Notwithstanding continuing tensions, the RIHS school network is still the most impressive in Cambodia.

THE MUSLIM MAJORITY

Although the Salafi and the Dakwah Tabligh have played an important part in the rejuvenation of Cambodian Islam, they still constitute a minority among Cambodia's Muslims. As discussed above, Middle Eastern Salafism is widely identified as "new group" reformist (Kaum Muda); almost everyone else, including the Dakwah Tabligh, are seen as "old group" Kaum Tua. However, with the growing influence of the Tablighis, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Old Group is now divided into an old and new part.

Before the arrival of foreign Salafi organizations, the mainstream Sunni leadership was not directly involved in educational development, although since the early 1990s a few leaders had been receiving funds from foreign Muslim countries. The mid-1990s were marked by increased competition in the religious field, however, and nowhere more fiercely than with regard to Islamic schooling. Under the direction of the grand mufti and with the support of the Cambodian People's Party, the mainstream group decided to become involved once and for all in school development. They turned to Malaysia for help and inspiration. The network that resulted from this effort is discussed below.

Sjil Meunaga Ugama Annikmah Al Islamia (SMU) Schools

The SMU organization was initiated by the ad hoc organization "Charity Muslim Development of Cambodia." This organization started what later became the Sjil Meunaga Ugama Annikmah Al Islamia, or SMU Annikmah Al Islamiah, as it is called by most Muslims in Cambodia. They have modeled their schools on those run by the Malaysian organization Yayasan Islam Kelantan (YIK).[45] The YIK also provides the SMU with nonmonetary support, including currricula (relying heavily on Egyptian texts and models). However, the two school programs differ in several ways. While the SMU education is a four-year

program of religious study, the SMU's Malaysian supporters in YIK implement two curricula simultaneously: Malaysia's National Curriculum and the Maahad Al-Azhar Lil Buuth Al-Islamiyyah religious curriculum. The latter curriculum seems to reflect the view of Cambodia's religious establishment. The best-qualified graduates of SMU programs may apply for scholarships to study in Malaysia. In 2005, there were fifty-seven SMU graduates studying on scholarship there. While in Malaysia students can also try to qualify for further studies in the Middle East. According to SMU's chairman, Muhammad Rasat, in 2006 ten boys from Cambodia attended Egypt's al-Azhar University.[46] The establishment of the SMU has strengthened educational ties between Cambodian Muslims and Malaysia. Although Malay is no longer the language of religious instruction, it is offered as a subject in some SMU and Dakwah Tabligh affiliated schools.

Finishing one's education is not compulsory, and a majority of students do not complete all four years of study. In 2005, only 2.4 percent of 1,660 boys and 0.4 percent of 1,459 girls in the SMU schools passed the final exam after four years, hence qualifying for study in Malaysia. The fourteen SMU schools were all established between 1996 and 2005.

Like the other religious educational alternatives, the SMU schools aim to impart a deeper understanding of Islam in order to shape a new identity for Cambodian Muslims. Research conducted in 2005 showed that 22 percent of the school network's teachers were educated abroad. They obtained their religious education from countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia, rather than from Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, or other countries from the Middle East or South Asia. On average, the SMU teachers have received nine years of religious education.

The Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) Schools

When the Cambodian authorities closed the Umm al-Qura schools in 2003, the RIHS was left as the sole active Salafi organization. By far the richest Muslim organization operating in Cambodia today, the RIHS has developed so quickly that the national Sunni establishment has accused them of having a political agenda. They were accused of setting up a political party and planning to build their own Muslim university, moves seen as potentially divisive. However, as noted above,

the RIHS gave in to the national Sunni establishment, which by late 2006 had reasserted its control over the broader Muslim community.

The RIHS schools differ from their counterparts in Cambodia. All provide instruction in general or "secular" subjects, which results in longer schooldays than other Muslim schools. The majority of RIHS schools are also boarding-school orphanages. The foundation specifically targets orphans and, though they sometimes accept local pupils, even girls, after the sixth grade these students are not allowed to live at the school or continue their education. The RIHS offers high school opportunities at their Maahad Aseah Alabani Rohimullah Center in Phnom Penh's Cham Chao commune. In 2005, the school offered education and accommodation to 465 young boys. The RIHS also has a teacher-training center in Phnom Penh's Russei Keo district, in addition to eight other schools in six of the country's provinces. Their schools were built between 1994 and 2002. In 2005, RIHS schools, including the teacher-training center, had a total of 1,231 male and 608 female students.

From its first years in Cambodia the RIHS has sent students to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Since 2001, the number of Cambodian students abroad in programs of this sort has declined to the extent that in 2006 only sixty students remained in Saudi Arabia. However, there are reasons to believe that this trend may be reversed, because students returning from Saudi Arabia are themselves playing a critical role in Salafi schools. Some of these students have even written *kitabs* in Khmer.

Although the RIHS teachers' average education is nine years, just like the SMU teachers, some 24 percent of the former's teachers received their education abroad. Some 60 percent of that number studied in Saudi Arabia. The RIHS schools also generate a significant percentage of their own teaching staff. Some 15–19 percent of all the teachers received most of their education either at the RIHS teacher-training center in Phnom Penh's Russei Keo district, or at the now closed Umm al-Qura school in Kandal province.

Independent Schools

Nine of the schools my assistants and I visited did not belong to any school network. Most of these independent schools propagate a message similar to that of the Shafi'i Sunni majority. However, three

of the nine schools consider themselves Salafi and receive financial support from the RIHS. There are also two schools that adhere to a mainstream religious message but opt not to use the SMU curriculum. Finally, there is also the reopened Umm al-Qura school, which is now called the Cambodia Islamic Center and is run by the secretary of state, Zakkaryya Adam, and the mufti.

Perhaps the most interesting of the independent schools are those affiliated with the Dakwah Tabligh movement. One of these schools opened in Kampong Chhnang province in 2006 and did not yet have a curriculum at the time of my research. The one in Kampong Cham's Trea village has been active since 1992 and emphasizes Qur'anic memorization; it declined our requests to visit. The school's founder is also the Dakwah Tabligh founder, Imam Suleiman Ibrahim. After the terrorist crackdown of 2003, Ibrahim was arrested and held for two days by Cambodian police. Since that time, he has given only one interview (which was with me). From this and other information, it is clear that his school has sent students to Deobandi[47] madrasahs in Pakistan and India.[48] My recent research has confirmed this school's ties to Pakistan. I have also confirmed that some Cambodian students went to the same school in Pakistan as Rusman Gunawan, brother of the Jemaah Islamiyah leader, Hambali.[49]

The most interesting of the three Dakwah Tabligh affiliated schools is the school in the Kampong Som province. It shares much in common with the other two institutions, including an emphasis on the Malay language. But the school in Kampong Som provides a rare glimpse into what we believe were the curricula introduced to Cambodia in the 1940s. The Ma'had al-Muhajirin al-Islami Pusat Pengajian Agama dan Arab is somewhat more sophisticated than its predecessors. Established with funding from the Malaysian organization Janik Sri Petaling from Kuala Lumpur, the school offers religious education and vocational training for youth above fifteen years of age. The school's principal is a former student and teacher at the Dakwah Tabligh affiliated school in Trea village. These two schools teach Islamic brotherhood and selflessness, the importance of Islamic attire, and the dangers of westernization. However, unlike the Trea school, the school in Kampong Som teaches vocational skills, including sewing, fish hatchery, and animal husbandry. The Ma'had al-Muhajirin even offers adult religious education every Friday and English courses for interested participants.

In 2005, the Ma'had al-Muhajirin had 68 female students from three provinces and 207 male students from fifteen provinces. Girls are allowed to live inside the school compound, but in separate living quarters from the boys. All girls are required to wear the *niqab,* a black cloak that covers the entire body, with a facial veil that leaves only a slit for the eyes. The girls also have their own classroom where the teacher lectures through a loudspeaker because the male teachers are not allowed to enter their classroom. This segregation can also be observed during the informal religious education for adults on Fridays. Seated behind a black curtain, the male teacher avoids improper encounters with women.

The schools I have labeled independent all opened between 1992 and 2006. In 2005, these schools had 1,209 male and 695 female religious students. All of their foreign-educated teachers work in Dakwah Tabligh affiliated schools and were educated in Thailand. Two were educated in Salafi schools in Cambodia, Umm al-Qura and at the RIHS Teacher Training Center respectively. Both of them work at the Cambodian Islamic Center, former Umm al-Qura, in Kandal province.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

One of the newest protagonists in Cambodia's Islamic educational field is the CPP senator Vann Math and his Cambodian Islamic Association (CIA), which will have opened nine schools by the end of 2007. According to Math, all teachers in this system must hold a bachelor's degree, preferably from a Saudi Arabian university.

Another organization from Kuwait is also investing in Cambodia's religious educational system. The International Islamic Charitable Organization plans three boarding schools based on the RIHS model. The CPP politician and Dakwah Tabligh supporter Sos Musine has also obtained funding from the Arab Emirates for a new boarding school on the outskirts of Phnom Penh.

Other organizations beginning to look at Cambodia is Aisha Gaddafi's Watasimo Association for Charitable Works, which is currently involved in helping Cambodian Muslim students who want to go to Libya. Another active Libyan organization is the Islamic Call Society, a governmental missionary organization founded in 1972. There is also evidence to suggest that funds from Pakistan have been transferred to the Dakwah Tabligh group in Kampong Cham's Trea

village. This money was handed over through an intermediary from Haji Sam Sou's home village in Battambang.

The most recent international educational charity to invest in Cambodia is the London-based Muslim Aid. Our research, however, was conducted before Muslim Aid inaugurated its Cambodian activities. Nevertheless, we know that the Cambodian People's Party central committee member, His Excellency Othsman Hassan, and his Cambodia Muslim Development Foundation have been the recipients of Muslim Aid awards. We do not know yet if some or any of this money will be used for educational purposes. We do, however, know that Hassan's student organization, the Cambodian Muslim Student Association (CAMSA), has had contact with them for some time. They also had an ongoing cooperation with the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) back in 2003/2004.[50]

Table 5.1 summarizes the variety of Islamic school networks in Cambodia as of 2005/2006. The table includes new school initiatives by foreign donors.

Table 5.1. Varieties of Islamic Schools

	NETWORK DESCRIPTION	CURRICULUM EMPHASIS	TEACHER PROFILE
SMU Network	Fourteen schools, the largest network in 2005. Founded by Charity Muslim Development of Cambodia. Mostly connected with mufti and Muslim leaders with CPP connections. The network has the support of the Muslim establishment.	This is a four-year religious school open to all Muslims but seen as an alternative for students who do not pass the national exam or cannot afford to continue their education after primary school. The schools prepare students for a further two years with Islamic standardized tests in Malaysia and the possibility of university studies in the Middle East.	22% of the teachers are educated in Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia. The teachers have an average religious education of nine years.

Table 5.1. (Continued)

	NETWORK DESCRIPTION	CURRICULUM EMPHASIS	TEACHER PROFILE
RIHS Network	This Kuwaiti network operates eight schools and one teacher training center in Cambodia. In addition to some monetary support for three independent Salafi schools, the network also builds mosques and digs wells. New schools are planned in Kampong Cham and Kampong Som.	The majority of the schools teach a strict version of Islam. All schools have a state-approved secular curriculum. The majority of boarders are male orphans. Students often continue their studies in Saudi Arabia.	Many teachers (24%) have studied abroad, primarily in Saudi Arabia; 19% are graduates of an RIHS institution or Umm al-Qura. The teachers have an average religious education of nine years.
Independent Schools	Affiliations vary. Sometimes supported by prominent Muslim individuals. Three of the independent Salafi schools receive support from RIHS. Cambodia Islamic Center (formerly Umm al-Qura) belongs in the independent category.	Schools and curricula vary according to founders and affiliation.	Mostly educated in Cambodia. Six teachers from Qur'an recitation schools were educated in Thailand. Their average religious education is the same as for SMU and RIHS, i.e., nine years.
International Islamic Charitable Organization	This new Kuwaiti network will shortly be running three boarding schools, and they will in addition build 40 new mosques and 50 new wells (including five with roofs).	They will teach a strict version of Islam. State-approved secular curriculum. The majority of boarders will be male. Students will probably travel to the Middle East for further religious education.	N.A.

Table 5.1. (Continued)

	NETWORK DESCRIPTION	CURRICULUM EMPHASIS	TEACHER PROFILE
Cambodian Islamic Association (CIA)	Nine new schools funded by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). These are not boarding schools but day schools, with secular studies in the morning, religious in the afternoon.	Curricula not yet clear, but plausibly from Saudi Arabia or the Middle East. Vann Math is a CPP senator, with good connections in Saudi Arabia.	Religious teachers should have a B.A. from Saudi Arabia.
Sos Musine runs an organization called Sahakom Krom Pet. Funding comes from the Arab emirates. The school had not yet been given a name when research was conducted.	The school bought land and started building in Phnom Penh's Prek Pra commune in 2005/2006. It is meant to be a boarding school for 450 students. Religious education has not yet started and religious orientation is unknown.	When research was conducted, the school's curriculum was not yet clarified.	N.A.

GENDER, ISLAM, AND EDUCATION

With the exception of the RIHS schools that make available Khmer public school curricula, Islamic schools do not offer any government-approved secular curricula. However, a small percentage of boys and an even smaller percentage of girls use the religious education provided by SMU and independent schools as a stepping-stone to further education abroad. The students who attend these schools have already received a basic religious education from village Qur'an schools when they start their advanced religious education. They also tend to

be older than the RIHS students who spend only a short time with the religious teachers (*tuan*) in the village before they start their Salafi education. I found that some of the female students at SMU and independent schools were former students at RIHS schools. Some boys who did not qualify for further education at RIHS schools had also changed schools.

The religious schools provide girls with an education alternative they would otherwise not have. Muslim women have fewer opportunities than Muslim men or their Khmer counterparts. A combination of economic and cultural issues prevents girls from gaining the same education as men. Like Khmers, Muslim girls often quit school early in order to take care of their siblings while they also help with other household chores. Unofficial tuition fees present another obstacle that has an adverse effect on girls' education. Providing for just one child may cost a family more than 8 percent of its annual income, and when they have to choose among children, families tend to give preference to boys. What makes a difficult situation even worse is the dress code in Khmer schools, which contradicts codes of Islamic behavior. If a Muslim girl wants to wear the *hijab,* she risks being sent home from school. Muslim families thus find themselves torn between wanting to send their daughters to public schools yet desiring them to obey Muslim dress codes. This situation prevents Muslim girls from getting an education that would enable them to contribute more, both intellectually and economically, to their families and communities. The prohibition on wearing the *hijab* in Cambodian public schools is thus a serious problem for all varieties of Cambodian Muslims.

Gender attitudes also negatively influence rates of education among Muslim girls. In my survey of Muslim students, a significant minority (36%) of Muslim girls believed that Muslim girls have fewer rights than Muslim boys. Despite the fact that boys and girls have the same curricula, the chairman of the SMU, Muhammad Rasat, claimed that boys learn more than girls. Rasat insisted that the problem is the lack of female teachers. He underlines that the SMU and other Muslim schools are in dire need of more female teachers. For example, only three of SMU's seventy-one teachers are women. Rasat states that male teachers and female pupils do not communicate very well.[51]

In 2005, SMU had forty-two candidates for the final exam. That year they also had seven girls, all of whom passed. Six of

these girls have obtained scholarships and will be going to Perlis in Malaysia.[52] The following year also saw seven girls out of a total of forty-one students registered for exam.

The Cambodian Muslim researcher Farina So spoke at the "Short Course on Gender and Reproductive Rights" in Jakarta, June 4–25, 2005. She claimed that the literacy rate of Cambodian Muslim women was only 35 percent, as opposed to 59 percent for Khmer girls.[53] Research has also shown that, of Cambodian adolescents aged fifteen to nineteen, only 9.1 percent of the females have completed primary school.[54] In an interview with me during Ramadan in 2006, the director of Samakom Toun Nisaet Islam Kampuchea (The Cambodian Islamic Teacher and Student Organization) and editor of Sap Cham, Cambodia's only Cham-language radio station, Ibrahim bin Adam, claimed that only 60–100 Muslims completed high school every year.

As with Khmer Buddhists, most Cambodian Muslim students believe that girls do not need education, religious or secular, as much as boys do. I found that as many as 64 percent of Muslim students in religious schools think that it is more important for boys than girls to receive an education. If we only ask the female students, this number jumps to an overwhelming 85 percent. The bias for male education is not uniform across all three types of schools. While boys in the RIHS and the independent schools were more likely to state that their education was not more important, the reverse was true in the SMU schools, where two-thirds of the male population opined that their education was more important than education for girls.

In explaining their beliefs, some girls claim that boys are more intelligent, understand society better, and are more astute in business. However, these statements are counterfactual to Cambodian realities, wherein both Khmer and Muslim women tend to be as engaged in business as men. Nevertheless, women's work outside the home is not valued as highly as that of men.

There are signs, however, that views on women and education may be changing in the general Cambodian population, and this will likely affect the Muslim population as well. The Department of Higher Education stated that 25,201 students studied for a bachelor's degree in state universities in 2004. Of this total 33.5 percent, were girls;[55] of the 6,865 students in Islamic schools in 2005, 41 percent were girls.

Cultural attitudes are changing only slowly, but these statistics show that change in women's education is coming nonetheless.

PLURALISM

The definition of religious pluralism used here is actual engagement between the different sects or groups. In other words, without an active attempt to arrive at understanding and recognition of an "other" we cannot speak of pluralism. This definition would imply that the Cambodian Muslim majority's tolerance of the Imam San group is not an example of pluralism, inasmuch as this "tolerance" is merely based on a lack of familiarity with them.

In interviews, 70 percent of headmasters from the visited Islamic schools stated that they do not teach their pupils about the different sects of Islam because religious pluralism is not an issue within their schools. The result is that 99 percent of the students interviewed for this study expressed the opinion that there is only one correct interpretation of Islam. The existence of different *madhahib* (Islamic schools of law) and pluralism in Islam are topics rarely if ever touched on in Cambodian Muslim schools. Consequently, students remain largely ignorant of the fact that there have long been diverse traditions of knowledge in Islam.

Most of today's religious schools teach a strikingly monovocal Islam which is increasingly based on a personal, individual, and voluntary adherence to Islamic doctrines rather than ascribed participation in one's community of birth. The different school networks propagate a religion that devalues the local cultural context and emphasizes the individualization of faith through a process of deculturation and deterritorialization.

This effort at re-Islamization through deculturation is especially apparent in Salafi-affiliated and Dakwah Tabligh schools. Most Cambodian Muslims, except for the Imam San, have a narrow and unfavorable understanding of local "culture"; they see it as something that pollutes true Islam. The process of deculturation also impacts Muslim views of their non-Muslim neighbors. Despite claims that they encourage interaction with non-Muslim Khmer, my research indicates that skepticism toward foreign and "modern" Khmer influences is widespread and, probably, increasing in Muslim circles. Coeducation with Khmer is strongly discouraged in many independent and Dakwah

Tabligh–affiliated schools as well as in Salafi schools. For many pupils, contacts with non-Muslim Khmer are rare.

The lack of pluralism, hence, is not only an internal Muslim issue but is also directed toward the Khmer majority and other non-Muslims. A minority of the students—10, 13, and 14 percent in independent, RIHS, and SMU schools respectively—regarded themselves as anti-Western; 99 percent of the students we interviewed opposed the war in Iraq; and 63 percent condemned the State of Israel. The latter views, however, could very well reflect public opinion in many European countries as well as other Muslim countries.

CONCLUSION

Despite the growing trend toward a conservative or even fundamentalist orthodoxy, Cambodia's Muslims are for the most part well integrated into the broader society. Not since 1958 have Muslims in Cambodia made demands for some form of sovereignty.[56] There is neither proof of serious Khmer and Muslim territorial problems nor a re-ignition of Les Kosems' militancy from the late 1960s. Cambodia does not, then, have a separatist problem. However, among non-Muslims, skepticism and even hostility toward Muslims are common. News reports in the Cambodian mass media have played upon these sentiments. Some Khmer claim that Cham want to give parts of Cambodia to the Vietnamese,[57] and there were reports of killings in the Kampong Cham province in 2004.[58] In 2005, the Cambodian Television Network illustrated how the Khmer majority view the Muslim minority. In a series called "Manpower and Destiny," one of the lead characters was Muslim, and he was portrayed as superstitious, drank beer, and wore an earring. Complaints from the Muslim community, however, led to a cancellation of the show.

In May 2007 a handful of Muslims in the Pursat province were accused of trying to organize a militia in order to retake the Kingdom of Champa and lower Cambodia that is now part of Vietnam.[59] My research, however, has found no indication of Muslim militias being organized in Cambodia.

For some time now, Cambodia's ruling party has tried to suppress any Muslim opposition.[60] In Phnom Penh on August 7, 2006, Prime Minister Hun Sen spoke at a conference arranged by His Excellency Othsman Hassan and his Cambodian Islamic Development

Foundation. The prime minister defended the government's closure of the Umm al-Qura school in Kandal. He also said that all Muslim aid should be channeled through the mufti or other Muslims from the Sunni establishment.[61] Oppositional politicians like Sam Rainsy's Ahmad Yahya immediately went to the English-language newspaper *Cambodia Daily* and declared that the mufti is only a pawn of the ruling party, and that the party wants to use Islamic aid to strengthen its influence over Cambodia's Muslims. This claim was vigorously denied by Muslims affiliated with the ruling CPP.[62]

In one sense, the prime minister seems to have succeeded in his goal of containing Muslim opposition, and many Muslim political opponents have joined the ruling party. Although some Muslims feared that the CPP clampdown would lead to less foreign Muslim investment in the country, 2006 turned out to be the most active year in more than a decade. It looks as though this positive trend will continue in 2007.

On the other hand, tensions remain within the Muslim community, and conflict between different Muslim subgroupings could again erupt. Today (2007), conservative schools of a broadly Salafi orientation, well known for their disapproval of traditional forms of Cambodian Islam, are responsible for educating some 50 percent of Cambodia's Muslim youth. Although for the moment the Sunni establishment has succeeded in dampening opposition, the future may well bring further competition among different Muslim school networks and a renewed politicization of the rival visions of Islam they represent.

NOTES

1. The school was closed in May 2003. It was also known as the Al Mukara school, but most Muslims called it "Umm al-Qura School." The school later reopened under the name Cambodia Islamic Center (CIC), under the leadership of the secretary of state and CPP member Zakaryya Adam.

2. The Kuwait Revival of Islamic Heritage Foundation (RIHS) was the largest Salafi organization in Cambodia in 2005/2006.

3. www.intelligenceonline.com, September 21, 2006, and October 20, 2006.

4. One of the my informants confirmed in an interview with research assistant Aly Sary on November 15, 2006, that many visitors came to Rousha Yasser's (Umm al-Qura principal) house in 2003. Many foreigners, including men from the Middle East, also

came. He remembers Hambali because of his round face and recalls that he used to live in Phnom Penh's Boueng Kak area.

5. Thrupkaew Noy, "Follow the (Saudi) Money: Can a Small Muslim Community in Cambodia Resist Being Pulled toward Wahhabism?" *The American Prospect* 15 (August 2004): 58.

6. Mansoor Hasan, "Seminaries have fewer foreign but more local students." Hasan writes that fewer foreigners than before attend religious seminaries in Pakistan. However, 49 of the foreign students that attended were from Thailand, 14 from Malaysia, and 10 from Indonesia. Seven pupils came from Uganda, 6 from Somalia, 4 from the Philippines, and 3 each from Ghana and Cambodia. Security agencies arrested 6 Indonesian and 13 Malaysian students in September 2003 at two Salafi seminaries, and 13 of them were arrested at the Abu Bakar University. One of the arrested students was Rusman Gunawan, brother of Hambali; *Daily Times* (Lahore, Pakistan), April 18, 2005, p. 7.

7. Research conducted in 2005 by Bjørn Atle Blengsli, Aly Sary, and Vannary bintey Mathly.

8. A doctrinal orientation founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908). Most Muslims consider them heretical because they see their founder as a prophet.

9. *Ukhna* is an honorary title given to those who have donated $100,000 for development or humanitarian purposes.

10. In an E-mail on May 31, 2007, the French researcher Emiko Stock claimed that the title O*n g'nur,* which she spells "Ong Khnuur," has been in use for nine generations among the Imam San. The official endorsement of the title is, however, an only recent development. *G'nur* may be translated literally as Elder, Grandfather, Old Man, King, Chief, Master, or Minister.

11. In August 2004, I attended a Mawlid ceremony in Kampot province where I was told that they had seven villages with people who considered themselves Imam San adherents in the province. Though only a few elders spoke Cham, and missionaries had taught them the benefit of praying five times per day, they still considered themselves followers of Imam San. Later the same year, the On g'nur in Kampong Chhnang province acknowledged their existence, though he emphasized that they did not have much contact. Two years later, Salafi followers claimed that all Imam San adherents in the province had converted. My assistants and I found thirty-two Imam San villages in 2005 (11 in Kampong Chhnang, 9 in Pursat, and 12 in Battambang). Three of the villages in Battambang had started to pray five time per day instead of once every week.

12. William Collins, "The Chams of Cambodia" (Phnom Penh: Center for Advanced Study, 1996), p. 75. Norodom Sihanouk coined a new terminology for some of Cambodia's minorities; "Khmer Loeu" (Highland Khmers, indigenous tribes of the northeast), "Khmer Islam" (Muslim Khmers, the Cham-Malay community), and "Khmer Krom" (lowland ethnic Khmers from the delta in present-day Vietnam).

13. Collins, "The Chams of Cambodia," pp. 19–33.

14. Mak Phoen, "La Communaute au Cambodge du XV au XIX siècle," in *Actes du Seminaire sur le Champa* (Paris: L'Université de Copenhague, Internet translation; Proceedings of the Seminar on Champa; available at http://www.seacrc.org/media/pdfiles/ChamBook.pdf (1988), p. 84.

15. Marcel Ner, "Les musulmans de l'Indochine française," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 41 (1941): 151–200.

16. Mathieu Guerin, "Les Cham et leur 'Veranda sur la Mecque'—l'influence des Malais de Patani et du Kelantan sur l'Islam des Cham du Cambodge," *Aséanie,* December 14, 2004, p. 39.

17. Collins, "The Chams of Cambodia," p. 76.

18. Guerin, "Les Cham et leur 'Veranda sur la Mecque,'" p. 42.

19. Ysa Osman, "OUKOUBAH, Justice for the Cham Muslims under the Democratic Kampuchea Régime" (Phnom Penh: Documentation Series No. 2, Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2002), p. 129.

20. Raja Thipadei Res Lah was Cambodia's first mufti. He held the mufti position during the The People's Socialist Community, which lasted from January 1955 to March 1970, and later during the Khmer Republic until the Khmer Rouge takeover in April 1975. However, he was not appointed mufti by Norodom Sihanouk until 1960. He was later killed by the Khmer Rouge.

21. E. Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge: Inside the Politics of Nation Building* (Bangkok: Silkworm Books, 2004), p. 72.

22. Jean Delvert, "Le paysan cambodgien," in *Recherches asiatiques, Généralités: Ouvrage de Synthèse* (Paris: Mouton, 1961), p. 23.

23. Ner, "Les musulmans de l'Indochine française," p. 195.

24. Interviews with San Sos (seventy-eight years old), Halimah bintey Ibrahim (ninety-four), May Som bintey Abutaleb (eighty-eight), Yoeur bintey Ibrahim (eighty-five), in the Takeo province, and Mr. Tin Man (ninety), in the Kandal province, June 12–13, 2005. They also claimed that there was no secular education outside Phnom Penh and that they would have had to go to the pagoda in order to get basic learning. However, the Muslims thought they could do better themselves and did not want to attend Buddhist schools.

25. Dr. Zafar Alam, "Islamic Education Theory and Practice" (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 2003) p. 34.

26. My interview with the religious teacher Haji Yusof at the RIHS teacher-training center located in th Norussalam Mosque in Rusei Keo commune, Phnom Penh, in April 2002.

27. Ben Kiernan, "Orphans of Genocide: The Cham Muslims of Kampuchea under Pol Pot," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 20, no. 4 (1988), p. 6.

28. Ysa Osman, "How Many Cham Killed Important Genocide Evidence," *Phnom Penh Post,* March 10–23, 2006; available at http://www.phnompenhpost.com/TXT/letters/l1505-1.htm.

29. Ysa Osman's figure on Muslims in prewar Cambodia is supported by the late Math Ly, secretary of state and director of the Cambodian Islamic Center, Zakaryya Adam, Senator Vann Math a.k.a Math Marawan, and Tres Sarom, Inspector, Inspection Department, Ministry of Cults and Religious Affairs.

30. Ysa Osman, "How Many Cham Killed Important Genocide Evidence," *Phnom Penh Post,* March 10–23, 2006.

31. Kiernan, "Orphans of Genocide," p. 9.

32. Osman, "The Cham Muslim Rebellion," pp. 53–111.

33. Osman, "OUKOUBAH," p. 6.

34. Kiernan, "Orphans of Genocide," p. 25.

35. Osman, "OUKOUBAH," p. 119.

36. Collins, "The Chams of Cambodia," p. 87.

37. Among the movement's supporters are the CPP-affiliated Som Sokry, Abdul Kayom, Colonel La Lay, and General Hj Channy.

38. Collins, "The Chams of Cambodia," p. 89.

39. *Amir* means leader of a group or community. Here it refers to the leader of a Tablighi group.

40. Excerpt from my interview with the religious teacher Haji Yusof at the RIHS teacher-training center located in the Nourussalam Mosque in Russei Keo commune, Phnom Penh, on April 5, 2002.

41. The figure was provided by Sos Muhammad (the RIHS director) in an interview on September 15, 2006.

42. Interview with Cambodia's mufti, Ukhna Kamaruddin bin Yusof, at his office in Russei Keo Km 9, Phnom Penh, April 3, 2002.

43. Interview with religious teachers at the Maahad Aseah Alabani Rohimullah, Cham Chao Center, November 4, 2004.

44. This information comes from my assistant and my interviews with, among others, the Salafi adherents Haji Yahya bin Ahmad (October 21, 2006), Haji No Ry (October 21, 2006), Saleh bin Haji Yusof, and Haji Ly Musar (October 18, 2006).

45. Yayasan Islam Kelantan is the Islamic Foundation of Kelantan.

46. Interview with SMU director, Muhammad Rasat, April 7, 2006.

47. The Deobandi movement emerged in late-nineteenth-century India. The group stressed a renewed commitment to hadith and Islamic law as the basis for a new and reinvigorated Islamic identity.

48. Interview with Imam Suleiman Ibrahim, September 16, 2004, and conversation with former Pakistani student Ismael bin Saleh, April 7, 2007. Ismael had been studying in Pakistan for six years and is now in India.

49. Bjørn Blengsli, "No God But God, Can a Non-political Movement Be Exploited by Terrorists?" *Phnom Penh Post,* September 21–October 4, 2007, pp. 8–9.

50. Interview with the director Dr. So Mousine's assistant, July 30, 2004.

51. Interview with with Muhammad Rasat, April 7, 2006.

52. Ibid.

53. Farina So, "The Study of the Qur'an vs. Modern Education for Islamic Women in Cambodia" (Phnom Pehnh: The Documentation Center of Cambodia, 2005).

54. National Institute of Statistics, Directorate General for Health, and ORC, 2001.

55. Research assistant Aly Sary's interview at the Department of Higher Education, June 17, 2005.

56. Mak Phoen, "La Communauté au Cambodge du XV au XIX siècle," http://www.seacrc.org/media/pdfiles/ChamBook.pdf (1988), pp. 76–86.

57. Collins, "The Chams of Cambodia," pp. 41–45.

58. In early 2004 a group of Muslims from Kampong Trea village in Kampong Cham were collecting firewood when a Khmer taxi driver accidentally struck them. The accident led to a clash and the taxi driver was badly injured. This in turn led to the arrest of local Muslims. Shortly thereafter, a Khmer mob went to the local police station, where they seized and killed the detained Muslims.

59. Yun Samean and William Shaw, "Questions Swirl around Muslim Plot Allegations," *Cambodia Daily,* May 14, 2007, pp. 1–2; and Yun Samean and James Welsh, "Court Stops Right Workers Visiting Pursat Prisoners," *Cambodia Daily,* May 30, 2007, p. 16. Both articles describe a militia aimed at taking back the province of Surin in Thailand.

60. Interview with the Salafi leaders Saleh bin Haji Yusuf and Haji Ly Musar, October 18, 2006.

61. Lor Chandara, "Hun Sen Welcomes Aid from Mideast Countries," *Cambodia Daily,* August 9, 2006, p. 16.

62. John Maloy and Lor Chandara, "Mufti Is a CPP Pawn, SRP Lawmaker Charges," *Cambodia Daily,* August 10, 2006, p. 16.

6 ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES
POLITICAL SEPARATISM AND RELIGIOUS PRAGMATISM

THOMAS M. MCKENNA
& ESMAEL A. ABDULA

The armed separatist conflict that has continued at various levels of intensity in the Muslim Philippines for almost thirty-five years exploded into extraordinary violence and animosity in the first years of this century. In May 2000, Philippines President Joseph Estrada launched a massive offensive against the largest Muslim separatist group, vowing "an all-out war"[1] against them. The offensive—the largest escalation of the armed conflict in more than fifteen years—captured the main rebel camp and created hundreds of thousands of Muslim refugees, but it did not accomplish its main goal. It did result in an unprecedented terror bombing campaign in Manila and elsewhere, likely carried out by individuals connected to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the separatist group that was the intended target of the Philippine military offensive.

In early 2002, following the September 11, 2001 attacks, United States forces participated in their first military operations against

Philippine Muslims since the early decades of the American colonial period. U.S. troops supported the Philippine military in its pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf Group, a small, shadowy, and atypical Muslim separatist group that had kidnapped two Americans in May 2001. The group had a previous connection to al-Qa'ida, which along with the activities of convicted al-Qa'ida terrorist Ramzi Yusuf in Manila and the presence of a brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden in the southern Philippines, brought Philippine Muslims prominently onto the map of global Islamic terrorism.

The Philippine military and major global media outlets (which regularly described Mindanao as a terrorist refuge)[2] were anxious to link the MILF directly to al-Qa'ida, but could find no plausible evidence to do so. They were, however, able to connect some elements of the MILF to members of the Jemaah Islamiyah, the Indonesian terrorist group that carried out the Bali bombings of October 2002.

By 2003, as a result of both the preceding violent events and the intensive effort of the Philippine military to link the Muslim separatist insurgency in the South to the global war on terrorism, the frame of reference for many Christian Filipinos quickly changed from "Muslim rebels" to "Islamic terrorists." Public speculation about the source for homegrown Islamic terrorism in the Philippines also increased. In 2003, the Intelligence Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines was widely quoted as saying that local Islamic schools (*madrasas*) were radicalizing young Philippine Muslims: "[T]hey are teaching the children, while still young, to wage a jihad. They will become the future suicide bombers."[3] That concern was echoed more recently by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in its 2005 report on aid to the Philippines. The report notes that education assistance in Muslim Mindanao was partly intended to "counter inadequate, extremist teaching taking place in some of the hundreds of private [madrasas] that have sprung up in the southern Philippines."[4]

It is also possible, however, to find other views of the role of Islamic education in the Philippines available for public consumption. In December 2002, the news magazine *Newsbreak* ran a long piece that reported on the large number of Muslim children who attend school seven days a week—four days at a public school and three days at a madrasa.[5] The article noted the many shortcomings of public schools in the Philippine south and the emergence of so-called

integrated schools, madrasas that offer both Arabic- and English-language instruction. The message of the article was that Philippine Muslim parents generally want the same sort of education for their children as do Christian Filipinos—a solid grounding in moral values and acquisition of the skills necessary to earn a living in the contemporary Philippines.

Which of these two polar views of Philippine madrasas is the more accurate one? What are the values and goals that motivate Islamic education in the Philippines? These questions are of immediate concern to the Philippine government and to international agencies. They are the same sort of questions being asked by the governments of Thailand and Cambodia about their Muslim minorities. This chapter aims to make a start toward answering those questions for the Muslim Philippines.

EDUCATION IN THE MUSLIM PHILIPPINES: A BRIEF HISTORY

The Muslim territories of the Philippines mark the periphery of the Eurasian Islamic world. Philippine Muslims have long been separated from Islamic centers in the Middle East by both geographic and geopolitical barriers. Muslims today compose a small minority in the Philippines—just 5 percent of the total population. Their minority status is primarily the result of Spanish occupation and colonization of the Philippines beginning in 1571, which disrupted the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago and resulted in the Hispanicization of the conquered population. The Spaniards did not succeed in fully subjugating the Muslim populations of the south, but their continued efforts to do so for over three hundred years further peripheralized Philippines Muslims in the broader Southeast Asian Islamic world.

American colonizers succeeded where the Spaniards failed, eventually subduing Philippine Muslims in the early twentieth century by means of overwhelming force. Muslim armed resistance to American colonial occupation at the beginning of the twentieth century was sporadic but fierce. American forces eventually established colonial control, ended the formal authority of local sultans, and imposed a colonial system of education. The Philippine Republic, established in 1946, continued the U.S. colonial policy of using education as a tool for integration. In the new nation, nationalism became a central value to be inculcated through education. Philippine nationalism, however,

often came with a liberal dose of the religious faith of the majority. Though rarely explicitly stated, one of the pillars of the Philippine national identity taught in public schools was Filipino Catholicism.

Islamic Education in the Colonial and National State

The education system that American occupiers found in the Muslim Philippines was made up of a large number of local schools they called "*pandita* schools." *Pandita* is a term in Philippine Muslim languages that refers to a ritual specialist who usually possesses some esoteric religious knowledge. The usual term used to refer to teachers in these schools was "guru." As Peter Gowing notes, the "Americans found that nearly every village of any size had its 'pandita school' where boys were taught passages from the Qur'an, Arabic writing, and a little arithmetic."[6] With their westernizing mission foremost in mind, colonial agents claimed to find little of educational value in the pandita schools. They did, however, provide some support to these schools early on, in an effort to maintain some control over them.

Ethnographic accounts of these local schools from the 1960s provide a richer view of them. None of the ethnographers provide a name for the schools, indicating their informal nature. All involve studying at the house of a local guru. None of them include teaching children to understand passages from the Qur'an, only to read and pronounce them. The Arabic term *maktab,* currently used in the Muslim Philippines to refer to a school of primary Qur'anic education, seems not to have been in previous use.

Eric Casino conducted ethnographic fieldwork among a Philippine Muslim ethnic group—the Jama Mapun—in 1966. He describes elementary Qur'anic education for preadolescent children in the house of a learned Paki (pandita) for a period of six months to two years. Students received instructions from the guru twice a day and paid a one peso gift after each of thirty lessons was completed. Pupils sat cross-legged in front of wooden lecterns and learned each lesson by rote.

Inger Wulff, who conducted research at about the same time among the Yakan of Basilan Island, describes both boys and girls as young as six or seven years old attending local Qur'anic schools where the guru was usually a woman. Thomas Kiefer, who worked among the Tausug in the 1960s, reports that many Tausug children, both boys and girls, began to study the Qur'an at age six or seven. The guru was

usually a poorer woman, giving lessons to supplement her income. Kiefer notes that more girls than boys completed their studies, "because reading the Qur'an at funerals is a woman's specialty."[7]

Kiefer's description of female literacy and ritual centrality among the Tausug is not exceptional in the Muslim Philippines. Gender relations in traditional Muslim societies of the Philippines generally tracked patterns found throughout Southeast Asia. Female literacy was relatively high, and women were active in public life as marketers, ritual specialists, entertainers, and even political actors. The first female mayor in the Philippines (in the early twentieth century) was a Muslim from Cotabato. As McKenna has noted for Cotabato, efforts made by Middle East–educated Muslim clerics in the 1980s to restrict female activities were almost entirely unsuccessful.[8]

In sum, religious education in the Muslim Philippines prior to the 1950s took place almost exclusively at the home of a local guru, and had as its goal the reading and memorization—but not the translation or interpretation—of the Qur'an. This traditional Islamic education was widespread but rudimentary; the great majority of students studied for just two or three years; and those who studied longer were still rarely able to understand what they read.

New Ties with Islamic Centers and the Emergence of Madrasas

In the Muslim Philippines, madrasas are Islamic schools that teach students to understand the Arabic of the Qur'an. Most also teach Islamic subjects such as Islamic history, exegesis (*tafsir*), and Traditions of the Prophet (*hadith*). Islamic schools that fit the local definition of a madrasa did not emerge in the Philippines until the 1950s. Two principal factors contributed to their emergence. The first was an unprecedented intensification of ties with Islamic centers in the Middle East, particularly with al-Azhar University in Egypt. The second was a postwar economic boom in the Muslim Philippines.

Taking the economic boom first, the postwar period saw a significant influx of new money into the southern Philippines, first in the form of war reparation payments from the American government, and second as the result of new economic opportunities associated with Christian in-migration to the region and with a thriving underground smuggling economy. Newly wealthy Muslim elites (most of them established elites but others genuinely new) spent some of

their money to make the pilgrimage to Mecca and to enjoy the prestige that attached to *haji* status. The most prominent among these elites invested in elaborate status enhancements, building mosques and opening new kinds of Islamic schools—madrasas. Congressmen, mayors, and other Muslim political figures in the new Philippine state were those most likely to establish the new Islamic schools. As state-sponsored Christian migration into the Muslim south surged in the 1950s, Muslims lost their majority status in the most populous provinces of the south. One response was the development of a more self-conscious Muslim identity, which saw its materialization in new mosques and schools.

At the same time, new ties with Islamic centers of learning were being established. Beginning in 1950, the government of Egypt began sending missionaries educated at al-Azhar University to the Muslim Philippines to teach. These missionaries established themselves in formal schools funded by local notables. Unlike their local predecessors, they taught the understanding of Arabic and the interpretation of the Qur'an in addition to reading and recitation.

In 1955, the Egyptian government began granting scholarships for study at al-Azhar to Philippine Muslims as part of the pan-Islamic programs of Gamel Abdul Nasser. Between 1950 and 1978 more than two hundred young men had taken advantage of these scholarships. Almost all of these students eventually returned to the Philippines to teach in madrasas, but the development of madrasas staffed by Philippine Muslim teachers educated in the Middle East was disrupted by the armed separatist conflict that broke out in 1972. Because of the intense fighting and the extreme military harassment of those Muslim civilians deemed to be Islamic activists, it was not until the late 1970s that the Middle East graduates were able to teach and speak openly in urban centers. After the signing of a cease-fire agreement in 1976, however, the situation began to improve, and by 1977, new religious funding began to flow into the Muslim Philippines, this time primarily from Saudi Arabia and Libya. This funding allowed the Middle East graduates—now referred to as *ustadzes* (after the Arabic *ustadh,* meaning "teacher") rather than gurus—to open madrasas without relying on the patronage of traditional leaders.[9] We can say that the armed separatist struggle of the 1970s both stimulated and slowed the development

of madrasas. A 1980 study conducted by Ahmad Hassoubah, an Egyptian professor of Arabic and Islamic studies, reported a surge in the establishment of madrasas in the 1970s; but it also found that "*madrasah* graduates [were] still unable to use the Arabic language with proficiency."[10] Twenty-five years later, there are signs that madrasa education in the Philippines has improved considerably. To our knowledge, however, no follow-up studies to Hassoubah's important work have been conducted.

SETTING THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

Philippine Muslims are geographically concentrated in the south of the country on the large island of Mindanao and throughout the Sulu archipelago (known collectively as Mindanao-Sulu). At the same time, Philippine Muslims have always been separated from one another in this archipelagic nation by significant linguistic and geographic distances. They are divided into three major and ten minor ethnolinguistic groups and dispersed across the southern islands. The three largest ethnolinguistic groups are the Magindanaon of the Pulangi River Basin of central Mindanao, the Maranao of the Lanao Lake region of central Mindanao, and the Tausug of Jolo Island in the Sulu archipelago. Smaller groups include the Yakan of Basilan Island, the Samal of the Tawi-Tawi island group in Sulu, and the Iranun of the Cotabato coast of Mindanao. In some parts of their traditional territory, Philippine Muslim populations retain their majority; about 98 percent of the population of the Sulu archipelago, for example, is Muslim. In Mindanao-Sulu as a whole, however, Philippine Muslims now comprise less than 20 percent of the population, due primarily to large-scale Christian in-migration from the north over the past sixty years.[11]

Most Philippine Muslims live within the boundaries of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). The ARMM contains more than three million people in five provinces in Mindanao-Sulu. The ARMM is a problematic governmental entity with severely constrained resources and very limited political autonomy. It also has a checkered history as a political institution with very low levels of legitimacy among the people it claims to represent. Nevertheless, the current iteration of ARMM has more autonomy and legitimacy than any of the previous versions.[12]

Field research for this study was conducted entirely in the broad lowlands of central and southern Mindanao, in the area known as Cotabato (Magindanaon: Kutawatu), the ancestral homeland of the Magindanaon—the largest Muslim ethnic group in the Philippines. The Magindanaon are also the only Muslim ethnic group that has been so completely minoritized in its own territory. The current armed separatist movement in the Muslim Philippines is effectively directed by a single organization: the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). It is no coincidence that the MILF is centered in Cotabato, where Muslims lost far more political power and arable land to immigrant Christians than any of the other Muslim ethnic groups. Cotabato is also where the latest peace agreement, when implemented, will succeed or fail, because it is where the aspirations of Muslim nationalists collide most directly with the power and majority presence of Christians.

Cotabato Muslims are identified in opposition to Cotabato Christians, while at the same time they must regularly interact with them in the land they now share. Ethnic cleansing has never been a significant factor in the political violence in Muslim Mindanao, Muslims and Christians having lived together in relative harmony in urban centers such as Cotabato City and General Santos City for more than half a century.

Economic and Education Conditions in Mindanao-Sulu

Mindanao-Sulu as a whole is the poorest major region of the Philippines, and ARMM is the poorest part of Mindanao-Sulu. This is due to a combination of factors, including long-term neglect by the central government of Muslim-majority provinces and municipalities, an armed separatist conflict waged off and on since 1972, and levels of corruption even greater than in the rest of the Philippines. The poverty and problems of ARMM are evidenced by official statistics, with ARMM having the highest poverty rate in the Philippines.[13] It also has the highest infant mortality rate (55 infant deaths per 1,000 live births) and the lowest immunization coverage (24 percent versus 65.2 percent national) in the country.[14]

The poverty of ARMM extends to its education statistics. In 2000, ARMM had a simple literacy rate of 68.7 percent, the lowest in the country, and a functional literacy rate of 61 percent (compared to 86 percent on the large northern island of Luzon).[15] Its public schools

have the country's highest elementary-level pupil-to-seat ratio (1.91, or almost two pupils for every seat) and the highest secondary-level pupil-to-teacher ratio (53.25 pupils for every teacher).[16]

Enrollment rates at public schools are low, even by Mindanao-Sulu standards. The Asian Development Bank notes that "the elementary net enrollment rate in 2001 was 82 percent as compared with the national average of 96 percent, while the completion rate of only 40 percent is just above half that of the rest of the country. The secondary school enrollment rate was the lowest in the country at 39 percent as compared with the national average of 72 percent."[17] Students drop out of elementary schools in ARMM at almost three times the national average (24 percent as compared to 7 percent) and drop out of secondary school at one and a half times the national average (12.51 percent as compared to 8.7 percent).

Statistics on Islamic education in ARMM are harder to come by and to rely on. Reports from roughly the same time period from different agencies give widely differing numbers. The Philippines Office of Muslim Affairs is reported to have recorded 1,890 madrasas in the country as a whole, more than 800 of them in ARMM. The Department of Education puts the nationwide number at 700. The Acting Secretary of Education for ARMM stated in June 2004 that there were 440 madrasas in ARMM, but only 40 were accredited by ARMM's department of education.[18] The *Newsbreak* article cited previously states, "studies indicate that at least 21 percent of children of school age [presumably in ARMM] attend classes at the [madrasas]," but does not reference these studies.

The Present Survey

This chapter presents results from a survey of ten madrasas in south and central Mindanao. Six of them are located within the boundaries of ARMM; the other four are located in Cotabato City, General Santos City, and Sarangani Province. The survey does not cover madrasas in Lanao or Sulu. Nevertheless, there are some advantages to this sample. It contains some of the oldest and largest madrasas in the Philippines. It covers a broad range of schools, including some very new ones, and some located within the core territory of the MILF, the only significantly sized and popularly supported separatist front still engaged in armed struggle with the Philippine government. For these

reasons, the sample is highly representative of Philippine madrasas as a whole despite its lack of full geographic coverage.

A TYPOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

The ten madrasas surveyed for this report can be generally classified into four categories, each of which we discuss below. Based on the available literature and on the opinion of knowledgeable interviewees, these categories reflect trends found throughout the Muslim Philippines.

Community Madrasas

By the mid-1980s, when the authors first conducted fieldwork in Muslim Mindanao, it was still common to find panditas conducting rituals. The term *guru,* however, had gone almost entirely out of use, replaced by *ustadh* (or *ustadz*). The new teachers were not panditas and they did not teach in so-called pandita schools. However, many of them taught in schools that were, in one sense, the descendants of the pandita schools, because they performed the same general function—the teaching of basic Islamic knowledge. What was considered "basic," however, had begun to change.

Today, the most common type of Islamic school in the Muslim Philippines is the community madrasa. In municipalities with predominately Muslim populations, almost every barangay (community) has a community madrasa to accommodate students who attend provincial schools. These schools usually operate only on weekends and tend to be small, often with fewer than fifty students. In ARMM, public schools are closed on Friday, so weekend schools usually operate three days a week, from Friday through Sunday. Most community madrasas teach only at the primary or elementary levels, although a few also include secondary education.

Ma'ahad Shabbab al-Islamie is one example of a traditional community madrasa. The school was founded in 1988 by a group of parents with community support. It is located in Kalman, a community on the shore of Lake Buluan in Maguindanao province, part of ARMM. With 320 students, Ma'ahad Shabbab is much larger than the typical community madrasa. This has to do with its location on Lake Buluan, a relatively remote but densely populated location. Classes are held on weekends in very simply constructed buildings with no electricity. The school has both primary and secondary grades, twelve in all.

The school also has twelve faculty members, almost all of whom are themselves graduates of secondary programs at local madrasas, although at least one studied for four years in the Middle East. As is typical of smaller community madrasas, Ma'ahad Shabbab has no affiliations or accreditations. This particular madrasa receives no foreign funding from any source, and it relies on parents for support rather than on prominent patrons. The school provides no scholarships, but at 250 pesos per year (US$4.72), its primary tuition is nominal.

In contrast to the highly localized character of Ma'ahad Shabbab, a newer community madrasa was recently established and supported by an overseas charitable organization. With 170 students, Madrasa Khadijah Binti Khuwalid al-Islamie is a relatively small school, although still large by community madrasa standards. It is located outside of ARMM in Alabel, the capital of Sarangani province, in southern Mindanao. Madrasa Khadijah, which is housed in well-constructed buildings with electricity and a substantial library, has only five primary grades and a kindergarten, and its tuition fees are only 100 pesos (US$2) per year. A likely reason for the low tuition is that the school was founded in 2001 by a local Muslim NGO with funds from a charitable foundation headquartered in Kuwait. Funding for the salaries of its six teachers comes from that same NGO, while the salaries of the other three are funded by the government of Sarangani province, which is not a majority Muslim province.

The majority of students enrolled in Islamic schools in the Muslim Philippines either attend community madrasas or comprehensive Islamic academies (which include English-language curricula that meet national education requirements). Almost all students in community madrasas are also enrolled in public schools. In other words, the majority of students in madrasas are also obtaining educations identical or very similar to those obtained by non-Muslim students. This is a point overlooked by casual commentators who worry publicly that Islamic schools are somehow leading Philippine Muslim students in problematic directions. The fact is that the majority of students attending Islamic schools are either doing so part-time while also attending public schools, or are attending madrasas that include English-language curricula that meet national educational requirements.[19]

The case of Madrasa Khadijah is particularly interesting. Due to overseas funding, it appears to be better built and provisioned than

the other community madrasa, Ma'ahad Shabbab. This would seem to be a welcome trend. But for those observers concerned about undue influence from foreign funding, Madrasa Khadijah reminds us that schools tend to be quite pragmatic in filling their funding needs and are happy to accept money from government sources, so long as those sources do not try to exert undue influence.

Traditional Postwar Madrasas

Two of the schools in the sample—Ma'ahad Khairie al-Islamie and Ma'ahad Ligawasan al-Arabie al-Islamie—follow the traditional postwar (World War II) model in Muslim Mindanao. In that model (as noted above), a prominent (and usually westernized) member of the traditional aristocracy (a *datu*), who almost always also holds a local or regional political office, founds a madrasa in his local district. He recruits a head teacher and constructs a school building. The school then receives continuous funding from the founder and/or from other local members of the traditional aristocracy.

Ma'ahad Khairie, founded in 1976, is one of the oldest of the ten schools surveyed. It is located in Buluan, Maguindanao province in ARMM, and was founded by a local *datu* who was educated in public schools and was mayor of the municipality at the time. It continues to receive financial support from local notable families, including the current mayor. With 598 students, it is a large school with both primary and secondary programs. Its classroom buildings are solidly constructed and it has electricity. Students attend classes from Sunday through Thursday. The head teacher at Ma'ahad Kharie graduated from a postsecondary program in the Middle East. The school also follows the standardized curriculum for madrasa education proposed by the Department of Education of ARMM, and their Arabic program is accredited by the Accrediting Association of Muslim Schools. Ma'ahad Khairie does not have an English-language program, but it does have some vocational courses in local languages and English, and it has accepted some non-Muslim students into these courses. Annual tuition fees are 450 pesos but the school provided fifty-three scholarships in 2006.

Ma'ahad Ligawasan was founded in 1983 in the municipality that is now called General Salipada Pendatun in Maguindanao province, ARMM. Salipada Pendatun was the most prominent Muslim politician

in the Philippines for most of the twentieth century. The school was started by his younger brother, who was educated in English-language schools and was mayor of the municipality at the time. The school continues to receive support from local government officials. A new classroom building was funded by the international NGO Oxfam. The school has also received a small amount of funding from a Saudi charitable organization.

Ma'ahad Ligawasan's classrooms are simple wood and concrete construction and have no electricity. The school has 402 students in twelve grades and classes are held on the same schedule as public schools. Annual tuition fees are 450 pesos (US$9) and the school provides fifty scholarships per year. Like Ma'ahad Khairie, Ma'ahad Ligawasan follows the standard of international madrasa education, although it is not clear whether it is accredited by an international organization.

Traditional postwar madrasas tend to be fairly large, relatively rural, and have full-time weekday class schedules. They are also more likely than community madrasas to be accredited by international organizations. They have primarily been underwritten by local notables, but a trend is developing to seek additional sources of funding, as can be seen in both of these cases (Ma'ahad Khairie has recently received overseas funding for a sub-school).

Qur'an-reading Schools

Qur'an-reading schools represent a special category of madrasa. As in many other parts of Southeast Asia (see Introduction, this volume), Philippine Muslims draw a distinction between Islamic schools in which students "learn the Qur'an" and those in which they learn *kitab*. In the former, the focus is exclusively on learning to read and memorize the Qur'an; analysis of what is read, or even Arabic instruction, is secondary to reading and memorization. In the latter, focus is on Islamic teachings in general, including the learning of Arabic and study of the Qur'an, the Sunna (the deeds of the Prophet Muhammad), and hadith (the recorded and validated sayings of the Prophet Muhammad).

Qur'an-reading schools, which stress recitation over understanding of what is being recited, represent the traditional approach to Islamic education in the Muslim Philippines and, for that matter, most of Muslim Southeast Asia. Today, however, these schools are

seeing a revival of sorts due to financial support from the Middle East earmarked precisely for these kinds of schools. Memorization is the key. In an effort to keep alive the ability to memorize the Qur'an as a sacred act, overseas funders have been establishing schools of this type in the Philippines.

Markaj Taqfiz al-Qur'an al-Karim is an example of one of these newer Qur'an-reading schools. Markaj Taqfiz was established in 1987 in Buluan, Maguindanao, ARMM. It is a free school for orphans and poor children, and most of the students live in dormitories at or near the school. Students attend school full-time during the week. The distinction between the primary and secondary levels is based on how well a student has progressed in memorizing the Qur'an. The classroom buildings are sturdily constructed and have electricity.

Markaj Taqfiz receives partial funding from the Buluan municipality, but most of its funding comes from the Charitable Foundation in the Philippines (CFP), which receives its funding from a charitable foundation in Saudi Arabia. There are similar Qur'an-reading schools with the same funding source in the ARMM. Ma'ahad Khairie (see above) has recently received money from the CFP to construct a new building as an orphanage for seven- to twelve-year-olds. The orphans will be taught to read and memorize the Qur'an.

Comprehensive Islamic Academies

Three of the madrasas in the sample have English-language education programs. All three also include postsecondary education. They are well-established schools with large enrollments and the only three schools in the sample that use computers. These academies attract students from beyond their immediate vicinities and even from different provinces. Two of the three were founded by some of the first Philippine Muslim graduates from al-Azhar University. The English programs in all three schools are accredited by the Philippine government's Department of Education. Only at Kutawato DarulSalam College is the Arabic program accredited by an overseas education association.

All three of the academies were founded solely with local funding. Nahdah Central Academy and Kutawato DarulSalam College, both in Cotabato City, have both received funding from private donors in Saudi Arabia to construct mosques and new classroom buildings on campus. Kutawato DarulSalam College obtained funding

from the Philippine government's Ministry of Muslim Affairs to start its English department. It currently receives some financial assistance from Philippine government sources in the form of scholarships. The third academy, the Eastern Kutawato Islamic Institute in Buluan, has not received any significant overseas funding. It relies on tuition, local donations, and a subsidy from the Philippine Association of Private Education (a governmental organization) to pay teachers' salaries. It is the only school in the sample to receive funding from that government agency.

With 783 full-time students, Kutawato DarulSalam College is by far the largest madrasa of the ten studied, and one of the largest in the country. It was founded in 1979 by Ustadz Omar Pasigan and Ustadz Ali Abdulajiz Naga, two members of the first group of Philippine Muslim students to complete a full course of study at al-Azhar University. It began as a traditional madrasa but added an English program in the late 1980s. The most notable feature of the college today is that it is primarily an English-language educational institution. Only 105 of the 783 students are enrolled as students in Arabic programs, and these are only at the secondary and tertiary levels; there is no exclusively Arabic "track" in the primary and elementary levels. All primary and elementary students take Arabic language and Islamic studies courses, but the primary language of instruction is English. By the same token, an Arabic track is only offered at the secondary and tertiary levels (currently comprising 105 students in total), but those students also take some English courses.

Eastern Kutawato Islamic Institute was also founded in 1979 and in many ways is the eastern (or upriver) equivalent of Kutawato DarulSalam College. Its founder also graduated from al-Azhar University. It currently has four hundred students in grades ranging from primary through college. The institute has twelve grades in its Arabic program. Its English program is for secondary and postsecondary students. The institute began its college program in 2002. Its secondary English program is accredited by the Department of Education and its college program has applied for accreditation.

Founded in 1958, Nahdah Central Academy is one of the oldest existing madrasas in the Philippines. It is also structured differently from Kutawato DarulSalam College, with its English track only starting in secondary school. Nahdah Central Academy has roughly twice

as many students in its Arabic track as in its English track. One likely reason for this is that the English track at the Nahdah is quite new. The Nahdah has a weekend Arabic program, but most of its students in the Arabic track are full-time. Over the past decade, the school has strengthened its Arabic curriculum significantly and now attracts Arabic students from all over Muslim Mindanao. All three academies have relatively high tuition fees, but at 3,725 (US$74.50) pesos per year for the secondary school, the annual tuition fees at Kutawato DarulSalam Academy are far higher than those of either of the other two, and are comparable to those at the most expensive Christian private schools in Mindanao-Sulu.

These three comprehensive academies represent a growing trend in Islamic education in the Philippines, combining Arabic- and English-language education—that is to say, Islamic and Western-style secular education—in the same school. Elsewhere, these kinds of schools in the Philippines have been referred to as "integrated schools."[20] We avoid using that term to describe them for two reasons. First, the curricula in the three academies in my sample are not yet integrated. For example, at Kutawato DarulSalam Academy, even though some English is taught in the Arabic program and Islamic studies courses are taught in the English program, students must still choose one or another program in which to enroll. Second, the term "integrated" is quite loaded in the Philippine education context, because it also refers to government efforts to integrate madrasas into the "mainstream educational system." By contrast, these schools represent independent efforts on the part of administrators, teachers, and parents to include English-language curricula. Their model is not the public education system but Philippine Catholic private schools, which offer comprehensive instruction in religious studies, moral values, and secular subjects.

Two Schools That Crosscut Categories

Two schools have not yet been mentioned because they do not fit neatly into one of the above categories. Markadz Monira al-Qattamie al-Islamie is a relatively new school, founded in 1999 and located outside of ARMM in General Santos City, a majority Christian city on the southern tip of Mindanao. It was founded and continues to be supported by the same Kuwaiti charitable

foundation that founded Madrasa Khadijah. Like Madrasa Khadijah, Markadz Monira is housed in well-constructed buildings with electricity and a substantial library. It differs from the former, however, in that it has both primary and secondary levels and a class schedule that runs from Saturday through Tuesday, which precludes students from concurrently attending public schools. Male students predominate at Markadz Monira (180 of the 260 students are males) more so than at almost any of the other ten schools. As with Madrasa Khadijah, tuition fees are very low at Markadz Monira.

Ma'ahad Datu Paglas al-Islamie is a large school (550 students) in Datu Paglas municipality (Maguindanao province, ARMM). It is a new school, founded only in 2000 by a Philippine Muslim graduate of the Medina Islamic University in Saudi Arabia. Most of the students at Ma'ahad Datu Paglas are enrolled in primary courses, but it also has seventy-five postsecondary students. All primary and most secondary classes are held Friday through Sunday, while college classes are held during the week. Ma'ahad Datu Paglas thus combines aspects of a community madrasa and a comprehensive academy.

Enrollment and Gender Trends in Islamic Schools

As noted above, no schools that could be called madrasas existed in the Philippines until the 1950s, and genuine madrasas did not become widespread until the 1980s. With the increase of Middle East–educated teachers (ustadzs) and the influx of money from the Middle East after the Tripoli Agreement (the cease-fire agreement that ended the initial phase of the Muslim separatist rebellion), madrasas expanded rapidly in the 1980s and continued to do so in the 1990s. It has been a steady and gradual expansion.

The gradual nature of the expansion of Islamic education is reflected in the ten schools in the study. All ten schools in the sample have either increased or maintained enrollments over the past three years. Most of the increases have been steady rather than dramatic, averaging 7.8 percent per year. But there is significant variance in the numbers. Three school have had no increases at all. But one of the newest schools—Ma'ahad Datu Paglas—has seen annual enrollment increases of 30 percent over the past three years.

There is no clear pattern of gender ratios in the ten schools in the sample. Community schools have somewhat more female than

male students, while the ratio at comprehensive academies is nearly equal. Although we do not have gender breakdowns for all levels at all schools, what information we do have suggests that females tend to outnumber males somewhat at the primary level and that males begin to predominate somewhat at higher levels.

WHY PARENTS CHOOSE ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

Ample evidence exists from the past half-century that many if not most Philippine Muslim parents have been concerned that their children learn both the moral precepts and cultural values of Islam and the general knowledge needed to make their way in the modern Philippines. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, those outsiders seeking to rule Philippine Muslims have been unrelenting in their attempts to "civilize" or "modernize" them through Western education—the operating logic being that Muslim regions of the country were insufficiently developed because Muslim minds were insufficiently in tune with the cultural assumptions of those who sought to rule them. Most Philippine Muslims easily saw through this cultural chauvinism but at the same time recognized the practical value of a Western general education. American colonial efforts to integrate Philippine Muslims through education were readopted in the 1950s by the Philippine Republic.

Despite the disillusionment of the 1950s and 1960s and the costly armed rebellion of the 1970s and onward, most Muslim parents still choose to send their children to Philippine public schools in an attempt to provide them with the skills they will need to earn a decent living in the contemporary Philippines. Nonetheless, the large number of community madrasas today is a testament to the desire of Muslim parents to provide their children with at least the essential Islamic teachings to accompany that Western secular education.

Much has been recently made by some commentators of the difficulties for Muslim children that are created by their being enrolled in two educational systems and attending school as often as seven days a week.[21] These commentators are mostly missing the point. Every week, millions of children throughout the world attend eight or more hours of extra school per week to supplement their regular English-language secular education with lessons in religion and culture—lessons that often include learning a completely different language and writing system.

The more serious problems for Philippine Muslim parents are, first, the quality and content of public school education and, second, the quality of Islamic education. The quality of public education in ARMM is one of the lowest in a problem-ridden national education system. Throughout the system, teacher salaries are low, teacher training is insufficient, and educational resources are lacking. These problems are most pronounced in ARMM and throughout Mindanao-Sulu. School districts tend to be highly politicized and sometimes corrupt. Almost all of a school district's budget goes to teacher salaries, which are lower than the national average and often paid late.

For Muslim parents, the poor quality of public education is matched by (and may contribute to) the questionable content of some of that education. In a recent paper, Jeffrey Milligan notes that, because of the extreme centralization of the Philippine educational system and the low level of teacher training, "the textbook is the curriculum."[22] Teachers have little leeway, and no available instructional materials, to supplement a textbook that was selected in Manila. Information about Muslims and their contributions to Philippine history remain almost entirely lacking in Philippine textbooks. Milligan observes that much of the information about Muslims found in textbooks from the late 1980s and early 1990s is "either erroneous or insulting to Muslims."[23]

Another consequence of poor teacher training and the text as curriculum is the seepage of Christian (particularly Catholic) teachings into public school education. Despite its inclusion in the constitution, the separation of church and state in the Philippines has been, at best, incomplete. The same constitution also charges public schools with the spiritual development of schoolchildren, which has usually been interpreted as mandating schools to "foster faith in God."[24] There are countless ways in which the cultural and religious biases of the majority affect the interpretation of that mandate and generally permeate public education.

As we have seen, the great majority of Muslim parents place their children in community madrasas—those that operate only two days a week—so that their children can also attend public schools. And many of the parents who do send their children to Islamic schools place them in the English-language "track," where written work is in English and general educational subjects are also taught. Even among students who take only the "Arabic track" in Islamic

education, the ideal (achieved by only a few) is to become a "double blade"—someone who has completed at least a secondary education in both Arabic and English programs. An exceptional student might finish a secondary Arabic program at a local madrasa and then return to public secondary school or to an English program at a comprehensive Islamic academy. One of the main goals of the new Regional Madrasa Graduate Academy created by the government of the ARMM is to create post hoc "double blades" by providing the equivalent of an English-language program to local *ustadzs* (graduates of tertiary programs in Islamic higher education).

EXTERNAL FUNDING FOR ISLAMIC EDUCATION

From conversations with parents of children at the ten sample schools, it can be concluded that most parents agree that the central issue in Islamic education in the Philippines is resources, not reform. Resources are also a constant problem at the madrasas themselves. A notable finding of our field research is the impoverished condition of almost every Islamic school we visited. Contrary to expectations, funding from the Middle East does not appear to have increased significantly, and school facilities have not improved since the 1990s. Bare classrooms, broken desks, and an almost complete lack of teaching materials, even in the best-organized schools, are disturbingly prevalent. Even the largest and most comprehensive schools, such as Eastern Kutawato Islamic Institute or Kutawato DarulSalam College, are inferior compared to their public and Catholic counterparts. And the poorest schools are shockingly so, equipped with no other furniture than decrepit benches and scarred blackboards in classrooms with dirt floors and no walls.

Only a few schools had any teachers who receive "missionary" stipends from the Middle East, and those were quite modest by present-day Philippine standards, the most generous being US$145 per month. By contrast, the average salary for teachers in government schools is closer to US$300 per month. Missionary stipends are given to individual ustadzs, not to schools. So even in those schools that receive missionary stipends, the money goes to only one or two teachers at most. The rest of the teachers subsist on tuition payments or donations from local donors, meaning they receive even less—some as little as US$40 per month for three days of teaching per week. Most have

additional sources of income as farmers or fishermen, or as service providers of various sorts.

Middle East–trained ustadzs generally buy their own books for teaching in Arabic or English while traveling and photocopy them for their students and colleagues. Other than the missionary stipends for relatively few teachers, minimal monthly support for orphans at three schools and external funding for the schools visited were entirely earmarked for classroom and mosque construction. Some of the schools had also received public toilets from Oxfam.

With only two exceptions, classroom and mosque construction funding comes from a single source—the Charitable Foundation of the Philippines, which is headed by a Saudi individual who resides at least part-time in the Philippines. Four of the schools had received building funds from this organization. School administrators invariably referred not to the organization but to the individual as the source of the funding, suggesting that they see the relationship as personal rather than institutional. When asked who supported the Charitable Foundation of the Philippines, the school administrators responded, "individuals with 'golden hearts.'"

Due to the severe lack of resources, every school administrator we spoke with expressed a desire for more funding for educational tools and materials (especially computers), facilities, and salaries. They all said that they would accept external funding from any source as long as it came without strings attached. This sentiment did not come only from ustadzs in remote and impoverished schools but from every school, and it was shared by Mohagher Iqbal, the head of the MILF negotiation team who stated: "Real *madrasa*s should offer all subjects; Arabic reading and grammar [alone] is not Islamic education. As for funding [for Islamic schools], we need first to establish a curriculum—then we would accept funding from any source, as long as there are no strings attached."

Pragmatic approaches to external funding were already evident in some of the schools we visited. For example, administrators at Kutawato DarulSalam College proudly display a plaque in the computer room announcing that the five workstations were donated by USAID. In addition, almost all of the books in the small library of the Regional Madrasa Graduate Academy were obtained through the Books for Mindanao Program at the Asia Foundation.

PRAGMATISM IN GENDERED EDUCATION

Expectations with respect to the dress of unmarried women remain context-specific and colored by issues of minority ethnic identity. Young women and girls are expected to wear head coverings while in Islamic schools, but they are not expected to wear them outside of school within their own communities. In fact, it is common to see girls removing their head scarves as they leave school. In their own communities they tend to dress similarly to young Christian women, wearing jeans and T-shirts. But young women will wear head coverings and long sleeves when they travel into town or attend college, where Christians are also present.

The general pattern we found in the schools we visited was that elementary education was coeducational, with boys and girls together in the same classroom, and secondary education was separate, with girls and boys in separate classrooms with separate teachers. We found no indication that girls and boys in secondary schools were learning different subjects or being taught differently. In fact, at two schools we saw the same interesting exception to the segregated classroom rule. In both, we saw some classrooms where high school boys and girls were being taught together, with fewer boys present than girls. We asked about this pattern and were told that the boys in these mixed classrooms were "honors" students and took classes with the girls because the girls were better behaved and the boys could thus learn more by being taught with them.

One of the most interesting educational developments in recent years in Muslim Mindanao has been the rapid rise of tertiary (postsecondary) Islamic education. Two of the schools in our sample have begun new tertiary programs, and a new postsecondary academy has also enrolled its first batch of students. This is significant, in that previously almost all tertiary Islamic education took place overseas.

This development is also significant because the large majority of students in these programs (70 to 90 percent) are women. We were told by an ustadz at Kutawato DarulSalam College (where the large majority of students in the tertiary program are women) that one reason women are so overrepresented is that male ustadzs face persecution by the military, and so young men are more hesitant to become ustadzs. We believe there is some basis to this argument. But there are other potential reasons as well. For one, far fewer

opportunities exist for women to obtain scholarships to study at Islamic institutions overseas.

However, the main reason for the growing number of women pursuing degrees at local tertiary programs seems to be the new availability of positions in government schools for Arabic teachers. Throughout the ARMM, legislation mandating the teaching of Arabic and "Islamic values" in government schools where the majority of students are Muslims has been implemented.[25] Preference is given to teachers with tertiary degrees in Islamic studies. These programs have thus developed at least partially as the result of a new demand for tertiary degrees. And most of the new students are women because women predominate as teachers in public schools. In fact, some of the women enrolled are already employed as teachers in government schools. Current ustadzs are unhappy with the new ARMM teaching program because, at present, it includes only the teaching of Arabic, and no other Islamic subjects, in government schools. The women enrolled in these programs are thus actually training to become teachers of elementary Arabic in government schools.

One of the new tertiary programs is unique in that it enrolls students, most of them women, who have virtually no background in Islamic studies. The tertiary division of the Regional Madrasah Graduate Academy (REMACADEMY) enrolled its first cohort of students in 2005, most of whom are graduates of secular elementary and secondary schools with little or no knowledge of Arabic. This program teaches them elementary Arabic and basic knowledge about Islam and Islamic education. The language of instruction is English or the local language, Magindanaon. Most of the women in this program are hoping to find jobs as overseas contract workers in the Middle East, primarily as nannies and domestic helpers, and are studying elementary Arabic to improve their chances of obtaining good positions. There are many more overseas jobs in the Middle East advertised for women than for men.

PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO REFORM ISLAMIC EDUCATION

In the American colonial period it was called The Moro Problem.[26] In the early Republic of the 1950s it became The Muslim Problem.[27] Today it has been transformed into The Madrasa Problem.[28] It has been called different names by successive Philippine governments,

but it is always essentially the same problem as they see it: Philippine Muslims are holding the nation back because of their recalcitrance in assimilating into the national polity. And the proposed solution is always the same—more and "better" education.

Recent concerns on the part of some in the Philippine government and elsewhere about the possible role of madrasas in radicalizing young Philippine Muslims have accelerated efforts by the government to "reform" madrasa education. In March 2003, President Gloria Arroyo called for the integration of madrasas into the country's national education system. In June 2003, the ARMM's Bureau of Madrasas, which is overseen by the national Department of Education, submitted to the department an integrated curriculum for both elementary public schools and madrasas in ARMM. According to the plan, public elementary schools in ARMM would begin to teach Arabic and Islamic values in addition to their regular subjects of English, Filipino, science and health, and math. Madrasas would also begin to offer the latter four subjects in their curricula.

A July 2004 interview with Education Undersecretary Manaros Boransing (a Muslim) gives us some indication of the problems that the attempted implementation is likely to face. Boransing began the interview by defining the problem as one of "split identity." "The two-system educational setup in Muslim Mindanao, far from enriching the Filipino Muslims' identity, merely serves to make them virtual foreigners in their own country, unprepared to compete in the workplace."[29] As we have seen, this statement is simply wrong in respect to most madrasa students. Boransing went on to say that the Department of Education wanted to "filipinize" madrasa education, and that Philippine Muslims should realize that they are "Filipinos first, Muslims next."[30]

Such a statement could have been justifiably made in 1951. However, it is considerably more offensive today to moderate Muslims than it was then because of almost thirty-five years of struggle to attain a meaningful Muslim autonomy.[31] Philippine Muslims may be amenable to qualified Islamic education in public schools in ARMM, but the last thing most of them want is to "filipinize" Islamic education.

Renewal, Reform, and Resources

A gradual process of Islamic renewal has been under way in the Philippines since the 1970s—a process that quickened after the end of the most

intense armed conflict of the separatist struggle in 1977. That process has been initiated by a new generation of Middle East–educated clerics and has taken the form of encouraging ordinary Muslims to be more observant Muslims, to refrain from gambling and alcohol consumption, and to abandon some traditional rituals and practices considered by the clerics to be un-Islamic. As noted above, ordinary Muslims have quietly resisted attempts at behavioral and ritual reform that they felt went too far too fast. The Islamic renewal process has not to date resulted in any discernable lessening of the rights of women or any new broad applications of Islamic law.

If we define "radical" political movements as those which are willing to change the political status quo through force of arms, then the MILF clearly meets the definition. However, one must be careful not to conflate that political radicalism with "radical Islam," if by radical Islam we mean stringent religious fundamentalism and active attempts at the immediate and strict implementation of *shari'a* law à la the Taliban of Afghanistan. Islamic renewal in central Mindanao—most of it under the shadow government of the MILF—has been measured and moderate, not severe and radical.

That moderation extends to the schools in the survey. When asked about the Islamic orientation of their curricula, the ten madrasas in the sample answered almost unanimously. Nine said they are Sunnis with a moderate Islamic orientation. The responses of the schools that had significant funding from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were no different from the others. The Nakda Central Academy described its orientation as "traditionalist." The primary focus in the curricula of most schools is the teaching of Arabic, the sacred language of Islam. A second significant focus of the curricula is Islamic identity and practice, consisting of practical lessons in ritual practice, everyday ethics, and personal responsibility.

When asked if their school had an official position on the role of the state in implementing Islamic law, six of the schools replied that they had none. The four schools that replied affirmatively all wanted to see the eventual implementation of Islamic law, but the full responses of all the schools were more similar than different. For example, the respondent from Markadz Monira replied yes to the question about the implementation of Islamic law, but then added: "but as a learning institution we are more concerned about the learning process of our

students. We encourage our students to practice Islam in its totality. When they do that, they are following Islamic law."

The respondent at Mahad Datu Paglas replied no to the question about whether the school had an official position on the implementation of Islamic law, but also added, "we want Islamic law to prevail, even if just among ourselves (in the school) and that it be practiced by our students." In answer to this question, virtually all of the respondents brought the topic back around to what goes on inside the school and the key role of the institution in instilling Islamic moral values in its students.

When asked about the qualifications they looked for in prospective faculty members, none of the ten respondents considered membership in a particular religious or political organization to be an important consideration. Five of them said it was not required at all. Only two of the respondents—from the two largest comprehensive academies, the Nakdah Central Academy and DarulSalam College—replied that a prospective faculty member's affiliation with a particular religious scholar or institution was important. All ten respondents, however, felt that fluency in Arabic was an important or very important consideration. These responses suggest that madrasas are more pragmatic than ideological in their hiring preferences. The concerns of the two comprehensive academies likely reflect quality concerns more than doctrinal ones. As two of the high-status and higher-priced schools, they need to hire teachers, in both their Arabic and English programs, with the best credentials from the best postsecondary schools. For all the madrasas, hiring the best Arabic teachers they can afford is, not surprisingly, a primary consideration.

Recent Efforts toward Reform

Internal and external efforts to reform Islamic education have met with varying degrees of success. The Department of Education in ARMM is initiating various efforts in addition to the major initiative noted earlier of integrating "Islamic" education into government schools within ARMM. One initiative is a multiyear project to create a standardized madrasa curriculum. ARMM is working with a consortium of schools in Cotabato City (considered some of the best madrasas in the country) to complete one year's curriculum each year. They have recently finished creating the standard first-year curriculum.

Other, externally funded attempts at Islamic education reform are also under way, although the results are less clear. The Basic Educational Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM) program is funded by the Australian government. One of its goals is the "improvement" of madrasa curriculum in Mindanao. To that end it has organized workshops and seminars for ustadzs. Two ustadzs from Mahad Liguasan, an impoverished madrasa, said that they learned some interesting information from the workshop, but that they are still awaiting the building funds and textbooks promised by BEAM. BEAM is cooperating with ARMM, but instead of operating through leading Muslim educators it has partnered with Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, the leading Catholic education institution in the region.

The most ill-conceived attempt at improving Islamic education was made recently by the U.S. State Department. It succeeded only in creating significant mistrust and suspicion among a wide range of Philippine Muslims. A private U.S. education consulting firm was given a contract by the State Department to bring twenty-eight madrasa "leaders" from the Philippines to the United States for a three-week seminar on U.S. education, religious tolerance, and "values-based education." The selection process was rushed, unorganized, and secretive, with no real coordination with local stakeholders. Many of the madrasa "leaders" chosen were, in fact, not connected to actual madrasas at all, but were secular educators who claimed to represent madrasas in order to attend the program. As a result of both the design of the program and its flaws in implementation, a tremendous amount of suspicion and misgivings arose among ordinary teachers and students at Islamic schools. A Friday sermon addressed this program and specifically pointed out that American educators had tried to do something quite similar in the past by taking Philippine Muslim leaders to the United States in an attempt to westernize them. This U.S. effort to improve Islamic education was naive in both its conception and its execution. The design—bringing Muslim educators to the United States to teach them "religious tolerance"—was remarkably paternalistic in nature and repeated almost exactly the questionable efforts made during the American colonial period to teach select Muslim leaders to be "better" (meaning more acceptable to them) Muslims. The design itself undermined the likelihood that many genuine ustadzs would participate in the program. But the poorly planned implementation

guaranteed that the program would attract opportunistic individuals interested in partaking of a highly valued junket, including those with no genuine connection to any Islamic school.

The Postgraduate Program at the Regional Madrasa Graduate Academy

No single initiative better illustrates the dynamic and pragmatic nature of Islamic education in the Philippines today than the postgraduate program at REMACADEMY, currently located in Buluan, Maguindanao. REMACADEMY was conceived as an institution dedicated to improving madrasa instruction and administration by making available to the local ulama the expertise of Philippine Muslim secular higher education professionals. The academy was the brainchild of Benjamin P. Dumato, a prominent Muslim educator who was educated entirely in secular schools and had no background in Islamic education. He wanted to provide his expertise and that of other Muslim professionals to madrasa teachers while learning about Islamic education in the Philippines.

In 2000 Dumato obtained an ARMM executive order to establish REMACADEMY, but was not initially given any ARMM funding. Based on donations, volunteers, and modest tuition payments from students, he was able to complete his first master's program in 2003. In 2004 he obtained line-item funding from the ARMM legislative assembly. REMACADEMY's first postgraduate program was a two-year master's degree in public administration and Islamic management. Dumato had originally intended to enroll only ustadzs, but other Muslim college graduates without backgrounds in Islamic education wanted to join as well. The program started with a hundred enrollees and finished two years later with about forty graduates. The mixed backgrounds and interests of students and teachers reportedly made for lively discussions. On one occasion, a student from a secular background asked the group, "Why did Allah require that people pray to him?" The ustadzs in the group responded by citing verses in the Qur'an where Allah made such a requirement. To this the student responded, "Yes, I know, but *why* did he make it a requirement?" An animated discussion then ensued. This appears to have been the first time that an educational forum existed in the Muslim Philippines to allow and even encourage this type of discussion among this range of participants.

REMACADEMY's first postgraduate program was not without problems. The high dropout rate in the first two years was due primarily to the requirement that all written work be in English, even though class discussion was primarily in Magindanaon or Tagalog. English is the official language for all tertiary and higher education in the Philippines, but many regional colleges and universities use it only for written assignments. However, a number of the ustadzs did not have sufficient command of written English to complete the writing assignments. Another problem is one endemic to Philippine higher education—a severe shortage of books and other instructional materials. The REMACADEMY library remains small and limited in scope. The goal of the program is to apply an Islamic perspective to public administration concepts and issues, but the lack of reading materials on both Islam and public administration likely makes that goal more difficult to attain than it otherwise would be.

The homegrown REMACADEMY appears to represent the most well-considered, practical, and successful training initiative to date to reform Islamic education in the Muslim Philippines. Continued funding and future improvements in accessibility for ustadzs could make it significantly more successful. The less formal and tangible benefits of bringing together ustadzs and Muslim secular professionals for in-depth discussions are not easily quantifiable but are most certainly of great value.

CONCLUSION

Muslim nationalists tend toward Islamic moderation not only because of the localized nature of their political goals but also because they know that for their goals to ultimately succeed, they must reach an accommodation with local Christians. Initiatives such as the postgraduate programs at REMACADEMY are particularly significant in this context because they bring together Muslim nationalists from two ends of the Philippine Muslim cultural spectrum—highly westernized secular professionals and highly Islamized ustadzs—to discuss their similarities and differences and to reach at least a tacit consensus on the best cultural-political approach to take in a future Bangsamoro political entity.

Madrasas play a positive and significant role in cultural education in the Muslim Philippines. For the great majority of madrasa students there, madrasas are part-time institutions for enculturating each new generation in knowledge that is essential for the continuation of

cultural and religious identity. Despite vague claims by the Philippine government and military, no direct link has been established between Philippine madrasas and Islamist extremist groups.[32] Abdulrajak Janjalani, the founder of Abu Sayyaf, the Philippine's only identified homegrown Islamist extremist group, was a product of a Jesuit high school, not a madrasa. According to Vitug and Gloria, he conducted his early recruiting for Abu Sayyaf at that best-known training ground for political radicalism—a public university (in this case, Western Mindanao State University in Zamboanga City).[33]

In the Muslim Philippines today, all hopes are pinned on the successful outcome of current peace talks between the MILF and the Philippine government. Given the history of past failures at negotiated settlements, these may be false hopes. But it is more likely that they will be realized, based at least partly on the hard lessons learned by all parties from past negotiations.

In the Philippines, madrasas are central cultural institutions that complement rather than contradict vocational education systems. Madrasas anchor local communities and foster positive identities, and all of them need additional funding. Western donors should consider providing some of that funding in the form of straightforward, aboveboard financial assistance, with no strings attached. Due to their significant history of paternalistic educational assistance for Philippine Muslims,[34] neither the Philippine nor the U.S. governments would be appropriate donors at this time. But other Western government-funded agencies, or U.S. or international NGOs, would all be good candidates. A small amount of assistance would go a long way toward stabilizing these important institutions and creating sorely needed goodwill.

NOTES

The authors have been conducting collaborative field research in Muslim Mindanao since 1985. For this project, both visited all of the Islamic schools in the project and interviewed teachers and students.

1. Carolyn O. Arguillas, "No One Remembers the Fall of Camp Abubakar," *Cyber Dyaryo.com,* July 10, 2001 (http://www.cyberdyaryo.com/features/f2001_0710_01.htm).

2. Zoher Abdool Careem, "The Philippines' Terrorist Refuge," *Time Asia Magazine,* February 17, 2003 (http://www.time.com/time/asia/magazine/article/0,13673,501030224-423565,00.html).

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4. USAID Budget: Philippines, FY 2005 (http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget.cbj2005.ane.ph.html).

5. Gemma B. Bagayaua, "Math, Science, and the Koran." *Newsbreak,* December 23, 2002 (http://www.inq7.net/nwsbrk/2002/dec/23/nbk_15-1.htm).

6. Peter Gordon Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983), p. 63.

7. Thomas M. Kiefer, *The Tausug: Violence and Law in a Philippine Moslem Society* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1972), p. 126.

8. Thomas M. McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

9. Ibid.

10. Ahmad Mohammad H. Hassoubah, *Teaching Arabic as a Second Language in the Southern Philippines* (Marawi City: University Research Center, Mindanao State University, 1983), p. 74.

11. McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels.*

12. For a thorough discussion of the various versions of autonomous regions for Philippine Muslims established by the Philippine government since 1977, see ibid.

13. The poverty rate is 71.3 percent compared to 39.4 percent nationwide; Philippines National Statistics Office, 2000 Family Income and Expenditure Survey.

14. 2002 Maternal and Child Health Survey, Philippine National Statistics Office.

15. National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) (http://www.nscb.gov.ph/secstat/d_educ.asp).

16. "Basic Education at a Glance," Philippine Senate Economic Planning Office, February 2005 (http://www.senate.gov.ph/publications/AG%202005-02%20-%20Basic%20Education.pdf).

17. Press Release, Asian Development Bank, February 28, 2005 (http://www.harolddoan.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1206).

18. "*Madrasa*h for peace and development of Mindanao," *Balita,* June 24, 2004 (http://news.balita.ph/html/public_html/article.php?story=20040624170725796).

19. UNESCO. The EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports, 2002 (http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/philippines/rapport_2.html). There are more than 2,000 *barangays* (neighborhoods/hamlets) in ARMM. If we make a conservative estimate of 500 madrasas altogether in ARMM, and another conservative estimate that only 400 of those 2,000 *barangays* have community madrasas, we reach the conclusion that a major percentage of the total madrasas and a majority of madrasa students (even assuming that the average community *madari* has less than 50 students) either attend community madrasas or comprehensive academies.

20. See, for example, Jeffrey Ayala Milligan, "Teaching between the Cross and the Crescent Moon: Islamic Identity, Postcoloniality, and Public Education in the Southern Philippines," *Comparative Education Review* 47, no. 4 (2003): 468–511.

21. See, for example, Gloria Jane Baylon, "Dichotomous Education System Splits Muslim Personality," *The Manila Times,* July 4, 2004 (http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2004/jul/04/yehey/opinion/20040704opi7.html).

22. Milligan, "Teaching between the Cross and the Crescent Moon," p. 478.

23. Ibid., p. 480.

24. Ibid., p. 488.

25. RA 9054, the Organic Act that established the ARMM in 1996, called for the teaching of Arabic and Islamic values in public schools in the ARMM. The legislative body of the ARMM passed further enabling legislation, and the teaching of Arabic and Islamic values began in many public schools within ARMM in 2005. At least one Mindanao province outside the ARMM—Sarangani province—has followed suit in schools where the large majority of students are Muslims.

26. McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels,* p. 105.

27. Ibid., p. 139.

28. Baylon, "Dichotomous Education System."

29. Ibid., p. 1.

30. Ibid., p. 3.

31. One also wonders how a conservative Philippine Catholic would respond to a parallel statement about Catholics if the context were government attempts to legalize divorce or abortion.

32. "Defense, Deped to Look into *Madrasahs'* Alleged Role in Breeding Terrorists," *MindaNews,* vol. 2, no. 40, June 16, 2003.

33. Marites Dnguilan Vitug and Glenda M. Gloria, *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao* (Manila: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs, 2000), p. 213.

34. See McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels.*

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INDEX

Abduh, Muhammad, 21, 87, 157–59, 180
Abdul Kadir, Haji Sulong bin Haji (Muslim reformist), 159–60, 167
Abdullah, Taufik, 22
ABIM (Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement), 134, 156
Abu Sayyaf (Philippine terror group), 40, 206, 234
Abuza, Zachary, 46n1, 47n4, 99n4, 138n13, 171n57
Afghani, Jamal al-Din al-, 21, 157, 159
Age of Commerce, 13
Age of Education, 4
ahl-i al-salaf (pious ancestors; first three generations of Muslims), 89. See also *salafiyyah*
Ahmadiyah, 174, 202n8
AK Party (Turkey), 74
al-Azhar University (Egypt), 39, 120, 151, 155–56, 190; educational assistance in the Philippines, 39, 209–10, 218–19; influence on Cambodian school curricula, 190; Malaysian links, 120; southern Thai links, 151, 155
aliran politik (political currents, Indonesian), 72, 102n46
al-Mukmin *pesantren*, 1, 28, 56, 73; curriculum, 84–86, 104n75. *See also* Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Jemaah Islamiyah; Sungkar, Abdullah
al-Qa'ida: in Cambodia, 2, 172; in Philippines, 206; second-front thesis on, 2, 56; support in Southeast Asia, 5, 46n1; in Thailand, 1–2, 141. *See also* Jemaah Islamiyah; Riduan Isamudin (Hambali)
al-Zaytun pesantren, 84, 104n74
Ansorisunnah (Muslim reformist organization, Thailand), 159
Anwar, Zainah (executive director of Sisters in Islam), 133–34. *See also* Sisters in Islam; women
ARMM (Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao): economic conditions, 212, 223, 235n13; educational quality, 223–24; educational statistics, 212–13, 235n19; ethnic groups, 211; history, 211–12, 235n12; population, 211; public schools, 213–14, 223, 236n25; recent educational reforms, 230–33; religious instruction, 7, 37–38, 224, 227–28, 230–32, 235n19, 236n25; social and political conditions, 211–13, 223; teacher salaries, 224
Arroyo, President Gloria, 228
Asia Foundation, 163, 225
Aspinall, Edward, 99n2, 103n54
Azra, Azyumardi, 50n55, 57, 100n10

Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar, 1, 28, 56, 73, 84; in Malaysia, 110; views of democracy, 86. *See also* al-Mukmin; Jemaah Islamiyah; Sungkar
Badawi, Abdullah Ahmad, 30, 128, 137, 140n62. *See also* Islam Hadhari
Bali, terror bombing, 1, 3, 14, 56, 86, 90, 172, 206. *See also* Jemaah Islamiyah
Bantani, Imam Nawawi al-, 53n91, 157, 178, 179
Banten (West Java), 16, 17, 19, 41, 50n54, 72, 178
barakah (divine grace), 8
Berg, L. W. C. van den, 24
bid'a (religiously unjustified innovation), 21
bissu (Sulawesi transgendered ritual specialist), 15, 40n48
boarding schools, Islamic. See *pesantren*
Bowen, John R., 48n23, 51n68, 52nn70, 71
Bruce, Lawrence, 47n12
Bruinessen, Martin van, 14, 17, 24, 51n63,

102n34, 105n79
Buddhism, 5, 31, 115, 142–43, 146, 179, 184, 198, 203n24
Bulliet, Richard, 10

Cairo, 11, 20, 39, 41, 113
Casino, Eric, 208
Cham (Muslims in Cambodia), 34, 174–76, 178, 182–83, 187, 200, 202n11
Charitable Foundation of the Philippines, 225
Chinese: attitude toward Islamic education in Malaysian schools, 30; income share, Malaysia, 117; migration to Malaysia, 19; population in Malaysia, 115; role in Cambodian politics during Sihanouk era, 181; schools in Malaysia, 115–16, 121–22; students at Yala Islamic College, Thailand, 169n33
Chvea (Muslims in Cambodia), 34, 174–76
Collins, William, 175, 176, 185, 202n12
colonialism: American, in the Philippines, 37–38, 53n96, 207–09; as catalyst of crisis of authority, 19; educational impact, in Indonesia, 64, 99n8; in Malaysia, 113; New Group Muslim view of, 23, 51n69; role in accelerating Islamization, 12, 16, 20; Spanish, in the Philippines, 207; Thai, impact on Malay Muslim education, 145. *See also* Hurgronje, Christian Snouck; modernity; United States
Compulsory Education Act (Thailand), 144
conversion: in Age of Commerce, 13–14; Imam San, to Salafism (in Cambodia), 202n11; to Islam, 5, 13–16; rationality of, 49n36; Thai Muslim fears of, 144. *See also* Islamization
Cook, Michael, 45, 54n108

Darul Islam movement (Indonesia), 79, 84, 85, 104n73
datu (political chief), 37, 216
DDII (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*, Indonesian Council for Islamic Predication), 84, 88. *See also* Saudi Arabia
democracy: Indonesian Muslim views of, 27–28, 44, 58, 91–95, 97; movement in Indonesia, 45, 99n2. *See also* liberalism
Democratic Kampuchea, 181; Muslim deaths under, 181–82
Deobandism (South Asian-based school movement), 51n63, 54n104, 187, 192, 204n47
Dhofier, Zamakhsyari, 52n76, 97, 99n1
Doorn-Harder, Pieternella van, 53n91, 100n18

Egypt: 31, 47n14, 53n87, 98; developmental assistance from, 39, 151, 154, 189, 209; intellectual influences in Southeast Asia, 21, 27, 74, 158, 180, 209–10; Southeast Asian students to, 74, 154, 166, 187, 190. *See also* al-Azhar University
Eickelman, Dale F., 47n16, 48n24
Estrada, President Joseph, 2, 205
ethics, Islamic public, 45, 54n108. *See also* Cook, Michael; liberalism; morals police

Faruqi, Isma'il Raji al-, 74, 103n49. *See also* integrated Islam schools; Islamization of knowledge
Feillard, Andrée, 52n78, 99n3, 100n18
feminism, Muslim, 100n18, 140n63. *See also* Sisters in Islam; women
fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence): in Cambodian schools, 178–79; central place in classical madrasa curriculum, 9–10; early composition and standardization, 7–8, 47n17; in Indonesian schools, 24, 60; legal digests, in premodern Southeast Asia, 15, 53n102; in Malaysian *pondok*, 112; role in modern Islamic schools, 24–25; in Thai *pondok*, 149
foreign sciences, in classical madrasa curriculum, 9, 48nn27, 28. *See also* Islamization of knowledge; *madrasa*
framing process, in social movements, 72, 91, 103n48. *See also* social movements
freedom of religion: Malaysian policies, 118, 132–36; place in Islamic curricula, 136

Gade, Anna M., 47n16, 100n9
Geertz, Clifford, 5–6, 46n10, 96–97, 102n46. *See also* Java; *pesantren*
Ghazali, Imam al-, 179
Gontor (Islamic boarding school), 63, 66, 67, 79, 85, 100n19

***h**adith*: Deobandi, 204n47; early collection of, 7; place in modern *pondok* and *pesantren* education, 24–25, 60, 112, 149, 158, 178, 209, 217; role in formulation of classical

jurisprudence, 10. See also *fiqh*
hajj (pilgrimage): from Cambodia, 35, 178; from the Philippines, 37, 210; from Southeast Asia region, 18, 41; from southern Thailand, 32, 148
hakem (village religious leaders, Cambodia), 177, 183, 188
halaqah. *See* learning circles
Hambali. *See* Riduan Isamudin
Hidayatullah (movement, Indonesia): attitude toward liberalism, 81; early history, 74, 78–80; economic ethics, 80–81, 82; magazine, 82; transformation into political movement, 82–83
higher education: aspiration to, in Indonesia, 67, 97; aspiration to, in Malaysia, 122; Cambodian, 198–99; curricular reforms, in Indonesia, 99n1; expansion of, in Indonesia, 68–69, 101n24, 156, 192n32; Islamization of knowledge debate in, 44, 54n106; Muhammadiyah-owned, in Indonesia, 26; Muslim, in Philippines, 40, 226–27, 233; Saudi, for Southeast Asian Muslims, 88, 193; for Thai Muslims, 32, 143, 146, 150–53; women's participation in, 40, 129, 198–99. *See also* IAIN; Muhammadiyah; Prince Songkla University; Saudi Arabia; women; Yala Islamic College
Hindu-Buddhism, 5, 13, 14, 158
Hindus, Malaysian, 115
Hizbut Tahrir, 81, 84, 104n72
HMI (Association of Indonesian Muslim Students), 75
Hooker, M. B., 31, 51n59, 170n37
Hurgronje, Christian Snouck, 18

IAIN (Indonesian State Islamic Colleges, *Institut Agama Islam Negeri*), 68, 101n24, 192n32, 156. *See also* higher education
ijaza (authorization to teach a religious text; a teaching degree), 61, 100n11
ijtihad (independent reasoning), 23, 41
'ilm (religious knowledge): pandita varieties of, 37; reform, objectification, and standardization of, 10–11, 162, 174; syncretic varieties of, 15. See also *fiqh*; Islamization of knowledge; *shari'a*
Imam San (Cambodian syncretic Muslims), 34, 175, 202n11. *See also* conversion
integrated Islam schools: Indonesian, 38, 73–83; Philippines, 220. *See also* Islamization of knowledge
International Islamic University (Kuala Lumpur), 129, 134, 136, 155
Irshad, al- (Muslim reform organization, Indonesia), 88
islah (reform), 113, 162, 228
Islam Hadhari (civilizational Islam), 31, 128, 129, 137, 140n62. *See also* Badawi, Abdullah Ahmad
Islamic Development Bank, 154, 169n25, 196
Islamic law. See *shari'a*
Islamic state, views of, 41, 84, 89, 107, 110
Islamization, dynamics of, in Southeast Asia, 5, 13–16, 20, 199. *See also* colonialism; conversion
Islamization of knowledge (movement), 44, 45, 54n106, 160. *See also* Faruqi, Isma'il Raji al-; integrated Islam schools

Jabatan Agama Islam Wilayah Persekutuan (JAWI, Malaysian Federal Territories Department of Islam), 132–33
Java: *abangan* syncretists in, 34; *aliran* currents in, 72, 96–97, 102n46; Banten district, Islamic education in, 17–18, 50n57; Darul Islam movement in, 84; early pesantren expansion in, 5, 16–18, 50n57; Hindu-Buddhist centers, 14; Islamic traditionalism, 46n10, 62–65, 96; Islamization, 49n47, 50n49; New Group reformism in, 20, 61; Old Group educational reform, 62–65; peasant rebellion, 19, 51n65; *pesantren salaf* revival, 68–69; ruler-ulama relations, 14, 49nn38, 40, 44; syncretism, 14, 34. See also *kyai*; Muhammadiyah; Nahdlatul Ulama; *pesantren*
Jawa (Southeast Asian Muslims in Arab lands), 18, 21, 51n69, 143
Jawi script, 23, 59, 112, 128, 144, 156, 161
Jemaah Islamiyah, terror group, 1, 46n1, 56, 83, 85, 99n6, 105n79; in Cambodia, 172, 192; in Malaysia, 110; in Philippines, 206; in Thailand, 141–42. *See also* al-Mukmin *pesantren*; Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar
Jibriel (Angel), 6
Jones, Gavin, 99n8

Kalla, Jusuf, 3, 56

KAMMI (Indonesian Muslim Student Action Committee), 75, 103nn52, 53
Kaum Muda. *See* New Group
Kaum Tua. *See* Old Group
Kelantan: educational history, 112; state Islamic educational system, 120; ties to Cambodian Muslims, 176, 180, 189, 202n16; ties to southern Thailand, 155, 169n30
khalaf, pesantren (mixed-curriculum boarding schools), 67, 101n30. See also *salaf*, *pesantren*
Khatib, Ahmad, 51n69
Khmer Rouge, 181–83
Khurasan (Iran), 8
Kiefer, Thomas, 208–09
Kiernan, Ben, 181–82, 203n27
kings: implementation of Islamic law, 12, 50n51; Persianized monarchies, 13–14, 49nn40, 42; rituals of, 15; role in conversion to Islam, 13–14
kitab (canonical commentaries used in Islamic education): in Cambodia, 35, 176, 178–79, 191; destruction of, by Khmer Rouge, 182; gender message, 33; instruction in, 17, 21, 60–62; in Philippines, 217; in Thailand, 156–67; role in *pondok-pesantren*, 23–25, 50n56, 52n75, 62, 67, 102n34, 176; Salafi composition of, in Cambodia, 191. See also *fiqh*; *madrasa*; *pesantren*
Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia (Malaysian Mujahidin Organization), 108–09, 110
kuttab (elementary Qur'anic school), 6–7, 12, 22
Kuwait, assistance to Southeast Asian Muslims, 36, 154, 163, 172, 187, 191, 193, 195, 201n2, 215, 220, 229
kyai (traditionalist Muslim scholar in Java), 96. *See also* Java

Laffan, Michael, 51n69
language policy, in Malaysian schools, 115–16
learning circles (*halaq*), 75, 161, 168n10; modernist downplaying of, 23; role in early Muslim history, 7. See also *madrasa*
liberalism, 45–46, 81, 98. *See also* Cook, Michael; ethics; morals police
Libya, 39, 187, 193, 210
LIPIA (Institute for the Study of Islam and Arabic, Jakarta), 88. *See also* Saudi Arabia
Lirboyo, *pesantren*, 67
literacy: in Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, 212; in premodern Middle East, 11, 49n33; in Southeast Asia, 59, 112, 198, 209, 212
Lukens-Bull, Ron, 48nn23, 24, 52nn71, 75, 76, 100n19
Lutfi, Ismail, 32–33, 161–63
Luqmanul Haqiem Pesantren (Malaysia), 110. *See also* Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Jemaah Islamiyah

***m**adhahib* (Islamic legal "schools"), 7; New Group attitude toward, 21; views of, in Cambodia, 199; views of, in Thailand, 154. See also *fiqh*
madrasa: arrival in Cambodia, 35, 62; classic architectural form, 8, 48n21; community, in the Philippines, 214–16; curriculum, 8, 48nn21, 25, 26, 61, 63–66, 179, 218–20, 225, 230–32; definition, in Indonesia, compared to "Islamic school," 100n13, 168n16; definition, in Philippines, 209; definition, in Southeast Asian settings, 22, 42, 61; first establishment in tenth century, 7–8; girls' education in, 23, 63, 208, 221–22, 226; growth in Cambodia, 35, 179; growth in Indonesia, 25–26, 57, 59; growth in Malaysia, 29–31, 43, 113–15; growth in Philippines, 39, 209–11, 213, 216–17, 235n19, 236n25; growth in southern Thailand, 32, 39, 146, 149–51, 160; introduction into modern Southeast Asia, 22–23, 51n63, 61, 160; place of nonreligious instruction in, 9, 48nn21, 25, 26; political commentaries on, 2, 40, 206, 227–28, 234; reform of, 30, 107, 119–20, 125–27, 146, 149–51, 153–54, 161, 179–81, 228, 230–33; role in classical recentering of Islamic learning, 10–12; role in Islamization of Southeast Asia, 12–20; as tradition of knowledge, 10–12; varieties of, in the Philippines, 214–20; *waqf* financing of, 8. *See also* higher education; Islamization; New Group; *pesantren*
Magindanaon (Philippine Muslim ethnic group), 212
maktab, 208. See also *kuttab*
Maluku, 28, 55, 83, 87, 90, 107
mandatory religious instruction, Malaysia, 125

Marcos, Ferdinand, 38
Matheson, Virginia, 31, 51n59, 53n88, 170n37
Mecca: 17, 20, 35, 39, 51nn63, 69, 53n91, 61; Malays in, 113; Philippine ties to, 210; southern Thai ties to, 143, 148, 159, 168n10. See also *hajj*
Milligan, Jeffrey Ayala, 223, 235n20
MMI (Indonesian Council of Mujahidin), 75, 89
modernity: "civilizational Islam" as feature of, 128; colonial ideologies of, 222; educators' grappling with, 4–5, 44, 160; fate of Islamic syncretism in, 49n47, 50n49; gendered contests in, 33, 87–88, 129–35, 164, 197–99, 229; *madrasa* curriculum as instrument of, 41–42, 44–45, 99n1, 160; Muslim reformist ideals of, 21–23, 41–42, 160; Muslim traditionalist engagement with, 23–25, 62, 134; place of politics and democracy in, 45–46, 94; public culture and, 12–13, 41, 45–46; *salafiyyah* views of, 87–88, 162–63; schools as key feature of, 17–18, 22, 40–41, 54nn105, 107, 68, 98, 143, 150, 174; secularity in, 44–45, 108; structural influences on, 42–43, 98, 162, 167. *See also* conversion; democracy; ethics, Islamic public; Islamization; liberalism; *madrasa*; secularity; women
Mohamad, Mahathir, 108, 126, 128
morals police, Malaysian, 132–34, 140n69. *See also* Cook, Michael; ethics; liberalism
Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), 205, 212
Moro problem (so-called, the Philippines), 38, 227
mufti (Islamic jurist authorized to issue rulings), 175, 176–77, 180, 182, 188, 189, 192, 201, 203n20
Muhammad, Prophet, 6–7, 163; as model for reformists, 33, 188
Muhammadiyah (Indonesian Muslim reformist organization): activist, in Thailand, 159; educational reforms, 64; founding, 25–26, 100n13; leadership, 104n72; role in 1990s democracy movement, 27; universities, 26; views on Indonesian nationalism, 73
mujahidin (fighters in the cause of God, *jihadists*), 28, 108
Muslim Brotherhood, 27, 74, 163
Muzaffar, Chandra, 118, 139n36
Muzakkar, Kahar, 79

Nahdlatul Ulama (Indonesian Muslim organization): 63, 73, 78, 98; gender reforms in, 63, 100n18; role in 1990s democracy movement, 27. *See also* Java; *pesantren*
Nasser, Gamel Abdul, 210
National Education Act (Thailand), 146
nationalism: Indonesian Muslim commitment to, 27, 64, 73, 98; Indonesian Muslim rejection of, 83–84, 85; Muslim, in the Philippines, 233–34; Philippine, Christian bias of, 207–08, 223; Thai promotion, as against Malay Muslims, 143, 145
NBR (National Bureau of Asian Research), 2–3
Ner, Marcel, 176, 178
New Group (*Kaum Muda*, reformists): in Cambodia, 35, 180–81; criticisms of Old Group schools, 22–23; in Indonesia, 25, 52n71, 61, 64; in Malaysia, 29, 52n71; in Mecca, 51n69; origins, in Southeast Asia, 20–22, 41; Salafist identification as, in Cambodia, 189; in Thailand, 31, 160. See also *ijtihad*; *madrasa*; Old Group
New Order (regime, Indonesia), 55, 79, 84, 101n29, 105n79
niqab (women's full facial veil), 87, 88, 193. *See also* veiling; women
nusyuz (wife's disobedience of husband, as seen in Islamic jurisprudence), 130–31. *See also* women

Old Group (*Kaum Tua*, traditionalists): in Cambodia, 35, 180–81, 185, 189; contemporary blurring of, in relation to New Group, 52n71, 97; educational reforms, 23, 41–42, 62–69; in Indonesia, 23–25, 41–43, 62–65; in Malaysia, 29; in Thailand, 31; social origins, 20–23. *See also* New Group; *pesantren*
Osama bin Laden, 206

Padri War, 18, 50n55
Pakistan, 34, 106, 154, 159, 165, 166, 192, 193, 202n6
pandita schools (the Philippines), 37, 39, 53n96, 208, 214

Pangkor Engagement (Malaya), 19, 29
PAS (All-Malaysian Islamic Party), 30, 52n85, 108–09, 119, 125, 127, 129, 134; effort to save people's religious schools, 127–28; government concerns about extremism, 125; views on morals police controversy, 134
Patani (southern Thailand district), 17, 18, 31–32, 113, 143, 157, 159, 176
People's Republic of Kampuchea (1979–1989), 177–78
Peletz, Michael G., 16, 50nn47, 53, 51n66, 52n70, 139n38
pengajian (religious study), 7, 47n15, 59–60; women and, 62
pesantren (Islamic boarding school), also *pondok* or *pondok pesantren*: Cambodian variants, 35, 179; Clifford Geertz on, 5–6, 96–97; curriculum, 23–25, 60–61, 64, 148–49, 150, 179; decline in modern Malaysia, 30, 43; early establishment in Southeast Asia, 16–18, 42, 148; expansion in Indonesia, statistics on, 69–70; financing, 153; for girls, 25, 52n77, 164; involvement in militancy, 1–3, 55–56, 141; Malaysian variants of, 29, 112; Middle Eastern prototype, 60; numbers, in Thailand, 149; postwar crisis, 43, 113; resilience in Indonesia, 62–65; role in the maintenance of Malay Muslim identity in Thailand, 142–43; *salaf*, 67–69; social networks, 71–72, 148–49; Thai variant of, 62, 142–43, 148–49, 164. *See also* Berg, L. W. C. van den; Bruinessen, Martin van; Geertz, Clifford; *kyai*; Nahdlatul Ulama
pietistic movements, 20
pilgrimage. See *hajj*
PKS. *See* Prosperous Justice Party
pondok. See *pesantren*
Pondok Educational Improvement Program (Thailand), 32, 144–45, 150
population: Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, 211–12; Cambodian Muslim, 34, 173, 181–83; Imam San (in Cambodia), 175; Malaysian, by ethnicity and religion, 115; Malaysian student, 124–25; Philippine Muslim, 207, 211
Prince Songkla University (Thailand), 151–52
print media: 19, 41, 87, 157; Islamic, boom in, 69, 88, 97, 102n37; New Group utilization of, 21
Private Islamic Schools (Sekolah Agama Swasta), Malaysia, 121–22
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), 27, 74–76, 80, 86, 89, 103nn52, 54, 56

***q**adis* (Islamic judges), 16, 17, 50nn51, 53, 177
Qatar, 154, 163, 171n61
Qur'an: elementary study of, 6–7, 22; girls' participation in, 62; memorization schools, 217–18; recitation, as women's traditional specialty, 209; revelation and recension of, 6; study, in Cambodia, 35, 178, 184, 192, 195; study, in Indonesia, 47n16, 59–60, 100n9; study, in Malaysia, 112; study, in Philippines, 37, 39, 208–10, 217–18; study, in Thailand, 148, 153, 165; translation, into Thai, 159

raja. *See* kings
Rama V, King (Thailand), 143
recentering, of Islamic learning, madrasa role in, 10–12
Regional Madrasah Graduate Academy (REMACADEMY, Philippines), 227, 232–33
Reid, Anthony, 13, 14, 16, 49nn37, 41, 50n51
Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS, Kuwait-based aid organization), 36, 172, 187, 190–91, 201n2
Ricklefs, Merle, 50n57
Riduan Isamudin, alias Hambali, 2, 110, 172–73, 192, 201n4, 202n6. *See also* Jemaah Islamiyah

Saeed, Abdullah, 47n12, 99n1
salaf, *pesantren* (religion-only boarding school, Java), 67–69. See also *khalaf*, *pesantren*
Salafism, definition, 87, 171n63. See also *salafiyyah*
salafiyyah: 28, 35; characterization of, 87–88, 171n63; opposition to Tablighis, 34; political ideology, 88–90; publishing, 88; schools, in Cambodia, 35–36, 44, 181, 187–89, 190–91, 199–201, 202n11; schools, in Indonesia, 87–91; schools, in Thailand, 33, 158, 160, 163–64; views on gender, 33
SAR (people's religious schools, Malaysia and Thailand), 30, 107, 118–20, 124–28, 139n50, 146, 149–58, passim, 164–65, 168n16, 169n22, 170n46; curriculum,

Thailand, 157; government funding, 119–20; political ties, in Malaysia, 119
Saudi Arabia: assistance to Thai Muslims, 32–33, 154–55, 160–63, 169n25, 170n46; funding activities in Philippines, 39, 210, 217–18, 221, 225, 229; funding to Salafiyyah schools in Indonesia, 28, 84, 87–91; organizational representatives in Cambodia, 36, 44, 172, 187, 191, 193, 195–96. See also *salafiyyah*; Wahhabism
secularity, 8, 22–23; Muslim education and, 63–65; 67, 70, 96, 135, 191, 220, 222; Muslim public ethics and, 45–46; predicted decline of Islamic education in face of, 43, 70; rejection of, 81, 82, 108, 110, 142, 160; "Western" sciences, Islamization, and, 44–45, 58, 74, 108, 160, 162. *See also* ethics; integrated Islam schools; Islamization of knowledge
separatist movements, Muslim: 2, 38–39, 150, 200, 205–06, 210, 212, 221, 229
shari'a (divine law): 8, 10, 12, 16, 33, 163; application of, 14–16, 50n51; diversity of scholarly opinion on, 136; implications for nationalism, 76, 81, 85–86, 95; Indonesian Muslim attitudes toward, 28, 42, 50n57, 58, 69, 76, 81, 83, 85, 89, 91–96, 98, 103n56; limits on, in premodern kingdoms, 14, 50n51; Malaysian debates, 107, 131–34; Malaysian Offence Act, 133–34; Philippine Muslim views of, 229–30; popular knowledge of, 12; Thai Muslim views, 163; satirizing of, in premodern Java, 14. See also *fiqh*
shaykh ummi (illiterate religious master), 11
Sisters in Islam (Malaysian women's rights organization), 31, 53n86, 133, 140n69. *See also* feminism; women
social movements: 27, 44, 51n65, 58, 102nn42, 44, 111, 118; schools as, 27, 58, 70–91
Starrett, Gregory, 47nn14, 16
State Islamic Councils (Majlis Agama Negeri), Malaysia, 120
Suara Hidayatullah (magazine), 82. *See also* Hidayatullah
Sufism: Brotherhoods, 19; reform of, 42, 54n103; role in conversion to Islam, 11, 14, 49n39; Tablighi use of, 166, 171n70; as tradition of knowledge, 17, 149, 170n55
Sungkar, Abdullah, 1, 84, 86, 110. *See also* al-Mukmin *pesantren*; Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Jemaah Islamiyah
surau (West Sumatran Islamic school), 50n55, 60, 100n10
syncretism, 5, 14, 34, 42, 49n47, 50n49, 158, 176. *See also* Islamization

Tablighi Jemaah (also Tablighi Jama'at): in Cambodia, 34–36, 174, 184–87, 189, 192–93, 199; founding, 165, 185; mass gatherings, 185; organizational scale, 186; in southern Thailand, 33–34, 53n92, 164–66, 171nn65, 67
Tamils, Malaysian, 116–17
taqlid ("imitation," as in adherence to established jurisprudential currents), 21, 23, 41. See also *ijtihad*
tarbiyah (Islamic education), 75, 89, 103n52
Tarrow, Sidney, 70
Tebuireng (Javanese boarding school), 25, 52n76, 63, 66, 68, 100n19, 101n27
Thai Muslim Students Association, 156
Thalib, Jafar Umar, 90, 105n85. See also *salafiyyah*
Thawalib (Sumatran madrasas), 64
Three Ministries Educational Reform (Indonesia), 26, 67–68, 100n13
Tok Guru (*pondok*-based traditionalist scholar, in Thailand), 148–49

***u**lama* (Islamic religious scholars): authority among, 10–11; power relative to kings, 14, 49n44. See also *kyai*; *madrasa*; *pesantren*
'Umar, Caliph, 6
Umm al-Qura (Saudi-sponsored charity in Cambodia), 36, 172–73, 187, 188, 190, 192–93, 195, 201, 201n1
UMNO (United Malays National Organization), 30, 107–08, 128
United States: 45, 57; report on Islamic education, 206; in southern Philippines, 38, 53n96, 205–09, 222, 227, 231; views of, in Indonesia, 82; views of, in southern Thailand, 109
usul al-fiqh (sources or principles of jurisprudence), 8, 24, 47n17, 60
'Uthman, Caliph, 6

veiling (of Muslim girls and women), 21, 75,

87, 88, 193, 197, 226. See also *niqab*; women

Wahhab, Muhammad Ibn Abd al-, 18, 51n58, 163, 188. *See also* Saudi Arabia, Wahhabism
Wahhabism: in Cambodia, 187–89; characterization of, 87–88, 169n29; influences in Thailand, 32, 160–63, 166, 167, 169n29; in Qatar, 171n61; representatives, in Indonesia 87–91. See also *salafiyyah*; Saudi Arabia.
waqf (pious endowments), 8, 114. See also *pesantren*
Watson, C.W., 102n37
West Sumatra, 17, 20, 22, 41, 50n55, 51n69, 60, 61, 63
Wiktorowicz, Quintan, 72
Winzeler, Robert, 155, 169n30
women: debates over status and rights, 129–35, 164, 197–99, 229; education of, 23, 52n77, 62, 63, 164, 173, 190, 193, 196, 198, 221–22; enrollment in Philippine Islamic institutions, 208, 221–22, 226; enrollment in Thai *pondok*, 164; in higher education, 40, 129–30, 198–99, 226; impact of Islamic reform on, in the Philippines, 229; literacy rates, 198; Muslim feminism, 100n18, 133, 140nn63 69; New Group reformist views of, 21, 41; *nusyuz* (wifely disobedience) controversy, 130–31; Qur'anic recitation as specialty, 209; role in Cambodia, 173, 190, 193, 196, 197, 198; role as teachers of Qur'an, 62, 208; role in southern Thailand, 33, 164; *salafiyyah* prescriptions for, 87–88; Tablighi commentaries on, 186; violence against, 53n91. *See also* Doorn-Harder, Pieternella van; feminism; higher education; *madrasa*; modernity; *pesantren*; *niqab*; Sisters in Islam; veiling
World Conference on Islamic Education, 135
World Muslim League, 88
Wulff, Inger, 208

Yala Islamic College (Thailand), 152, 154, 155, 162

***z**akat* alms, 29, 113, 153, 171n65
Zeldin, Theodore, 4
zinah (adultery), 131–32
ziyarah (pilgrimage to shrines), 8, 21

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